TECHNOLOGY, THEATRICAL AESTHETICS AND THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR

STYLIANI KERAMIDA

Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Styliani Keramida, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: Styliani Keramida

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ABSTRACT

Technology has long ago been acknowledged as one of the leading components in the work of modern theatre directors. However, little attention has been paid to the specific medialities of technology into the formation of directing models and their crucial contribution to the development of the role of the theatre director. This research sets out to examine and compare the directorial work of three well-known directors (Elizabeth LeCompte, Robert Lepage and Katie Mitchell) relating to the use of the medialities of technology and technology's impact on the production of particular theatrical aesthetics, as well as to the developmental identity of the aforementioned three directors. It also presents a historical background of key issues surrounding the relationship between director's theatre and technology, and formulates a homogenous systematic theoretical framework by discussing major premises of this specific type of director's theatre.

In an attempt to extend previous efforts to formulate directing theatre theories based on acting systems and dramaturgy, a methodological approach is adopted based on data (such as printed and audio-visual material, attendance at productions and rehearsals, as well as training in courses on media arts, directing, production and stage management, lighting and sound design, philosophy and film theory) in order to study the theatrical effects of the use of technology. This thesis

argues that the directing models of fragmentary technology, totalising technology and technological hybridisation through three key techniques, namely the use of technology-based collaborators, old and new media and techno-acting, manifest the development of the role of the director within a trajectory from mediality to multi-mediality and inter-mediality. The findings suggest that an important dialogue between the three models exists and that even though the three directors have used differing theatricalities, a significant development of their roles as directors suggests the inextricable link between theatre directing and technology. The findings indicate that technology should be granted a greater recognition by theatre scholarship for the development of the role of the theatre director and that the formation of a homogenous theatre theory from the point of view of directing and technology should be examined as one of the most significant criteria for researching theatre directing today.

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INTRODUCTION

'Essentially we are talking of making the invisible visible.'[1] (Peter Brook on the art of directing)

One of the most significant discussions in theatre research today concerns the relationship between technology, particularly new media technologies, theatre and performance.[2] The debate focuses mainly on the apparent opposition between live and mediatised performance, their respective importance and the aesthetic implications of each.[3] Since the first modernist creative blending of technology and art, theatre has been preoccupied with the functional properties and the aesthetic implications of the technical aspects of the production. Despite the fact that directors, performers, sceneographers, choreographers, lighting-sound-video designers have been seriously puzzled as to how to employ technology in production over the last 150 years, they have quickly seized the opportunity to experiment with innovative outcomes. Long before the modern period there were traditional technologies which were used in theatre for dramatic effect. Stage machinery, such as ekkyklêma, was used to represent the bodies

[1] Peter Brook, Peter Brook. *Autour de l'espace vide.* Directed by J. G. Carasso and Mohammed Charbagi. 1992.Videocassette. Paris: L' Anrat, 1992.

[2] In the present thesis when I refer to the term 'performance' I consider it mainly in terms of theatre rather than in terms of dance, music, opera or live art, since I approach the term in accordance with the focus of my thesis capacity as someone trained in drama and theatre studies. For more on the difference between theatre studies and performance studies see F. Chamberlain, 'Interrogating boundaries/respecting differences. The role of theatre within Performance Studies.' *Studies in Theatre and Performance* 25. 3 (2005): 263-270.

[3] A performance is defined as mediatised when the production includes the use of recording and playback technologies. For more on this issue see Chapter One of this thesis.

of characters that had been killed; mēchanē or geranos was a crane used to represent Deus ex Machina and the gods, and periaktoi were movable scenic units on wheels for quick changes of the scenery. All these have been used since the ancient Greek theatre. In the Middle Ages, trapdoors were used, as a hellmouth, for the emergence of devils. Flying machines were also developed for the transport of angels.[4] But it was the deployment of multimedia that created a new visual language in the 1980s and new media in the 1990s, which brought a significant revolution to the art of directing.[5]

The above phenomenon has been referred to variously by theatre scholars: for example a '*techno-en-scène*' by Aleksandar Dundjerović,[6] 'multimedia theater' by Steve Dixon,[7] 'directorial and sceneographic *mise en scène*' by Christopher Baugh,[8] and 'decalage or displacement' by Greg Giesekam.[9] The aim of this thesis is to offer a further insight into scholarship by showing how technology has managed to exceed its functionality in the work of the three contemporary theatre directors from the USA, Canada and the UK (Elizabeth LeCompte, Robert Lepage, and Katie Mitchell respectively) by managing to mediate a specific theatricality. My thesis sets out to analyse three significant models of directing with technology in the theatre using contemporary examples (my intention is to provide an analytical assessment of the

[4] Hendrik Baker, *Stage Management and Theatrecraft: A Stage Manager's Handbook* (London: Miller, 1980), 5-8.
[5] For more on history of art and new media see Michael Rush, *New Media in Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2005). For a specialised history of performance and media see RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance Art. From Futurism to the Present* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2001); Goldberg, *Performance: Live Art Since the '60s* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004).
[6] Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *The Theatricality of Robert Lepage*, 180-181.
[7] Steve Dixon and Barry Smith, *Digital Performance: A History of New Media in Theater, Dance, Performance Art, and Installation* (Cambridge (Mass.), London: MIT Press, 2007), 351-361.
[8] Christopher Baugh, *Theatre Performance and Technology*, 74.
[9] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 222.

aesthetics of the evolving art of theatrical directing, based on the work of Elizabeth LeCompte, Robert Lepage and Katie Mitchell, and to provide an interpretation of their theatrical directing in its nascent phase and to discuss its future as a symbiotic association with various, continuously evolving forms of technology). I also discuss paradigms from their theatre practice and three different models of directing which are based on theoretical and aesthetical approaches to the formation of theatre theory.

The purpose of this thesis is to focus on the specific paradigm of directing with technology and to establish the links that have been created between these two terms, directing on one hand and technology on the other. The theoretical reading referred to supports my contention that technology and directing, according to the hypothesis that they are inextricably and historically linked, form the key to understanding the development of the modern theatre director and that it is the development and innovation of technology which will shape the future directorial role in theatre, within the terrain of director's theatre. In this thesis, I examine this development by analysing distinct models of directing with the use of technology. The analysis helps to build an original and more detailed glossary of terms and theoretical models which are related to other theories such as mediality, multi-mediality and inter-mediality. The analysis is then applied to specific case-studies which have been constructed using bodies of theatrical work experienced and critiqued entirely in the context of production and performance. I use these case studies to test both my terminology and theory.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND AIMS

Directors who use technology as a directorial mark or who present a technological aestheticism as a fundamental directorial signature challenge the traditional notion of theatrical style. The traditional notion of theatrical style refers to the construction of dominant theatrical traditions in the history of theatre, such as neoclassicism, psychological realism, symbolism, expressionism, epic theatre. Therefore, their style is easily discernible and their work with technology has given rise to a certain type of director's theatre. 'Director's theatre' signifies a type of theatre in which the director-creator attaches great importance to the interpretation of the play through distinguishing staging features that emphasise their mark and signature.[10] Directors who direct with technology practice a variety of theatrical representations, experiment with a range of techniques linked significantly to technological apparatus and exploit extensively the potential use of technology on stage.

If this is the case, specific questions have preoccupied the writing of this thesis: Is there a directorial need for the technological apparatus to be present (in use, employed by the director and observable from the audience) during some theatre performances and why? How does this contribute to the overall theatrical experience? Are there any particular qualities of the explicit awareness of technological apparatus on stage that make the directing distinctive and unusual? The preceding questions have paved the

[10] For some examples of post-war Western director's theatre (such Joan Littlewood, Roger Planchon, Ariane Mnouchkine, Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, Peter Stein and Robert Wilson) see David Bradby and David Williams, *Directors' Theatre* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988).

way for examining specific concepts related to avant-garde directing, particularly theatrical techniques and practices which draw on the field of technology.

It is possible to distinguish clear models of directing with technology. In discussing the use of technology in theatrical practice I have developed a terminology to describe these models in terms of 'fragmentary technology', 'totalising technology' and 'technological hybridisation', and I trace these through the work of the theatre directors Elizabeth LeCompte, Robert Lepage and Katie Mitchell respectively. I will provide an explanation of these terms as they arise in the context of the case studies. These practitioners have been selected from a significant number of other contemporary directors, who have discernibly used technology in their work, such as Robert Wilson, Frank Castorf, Heiner Goebbels, Peter Sellars, Vito Acconci, John Jesurun, Joan Jonas, Jan Fabre, Tim Etchells, Simon McBurney, Andrew Quick, Pete Brooks, Marianne Weems, Meredith Monk and many more.

This thesis presents a working practice or morphology of modern director's theatre through the use of technology, demonstrates the use of directing models with technology and investigates how technology (medialities) plays an important role in mediating the art of directing (impact, effect). It also examines the developmental identity of the theatre director through the use of technology, or else the process of the role of the director being developed through the use of technology. I will investigate not only the ways in which the development of the role of the director is evident through the use of technology, by demonstrating how the two mediators, directing and technology,

have simultaneously historically emerged, but also how/why they are interrelated, entail one another and are linked in a profound and fundamental way, constituting a new stage within a developing situation (director's theatre). In this way, I aim to establish an appropriate framework that enables an understanding of the symbiotic relationship between directing and technology, and consider to what extent the technology-related shift in the role of the theatre director has been welcomed by the theatrical community (reviewers, theatre scholars, practitioners and audience). Thus I propose ways of interpreting major historical, theoretical, operational and descriptive premises related to post-millennium director's theatre.

Specifically, the working practice or morphology of Elizabeth LeCompte moved on from using elements such as TV monitors, sound systems and screens on stage to the visual collage of arbitrary fragmented objects. She developed a deconstructive acting style which signalled the impossibility of impersonation and the experimenting with dramaturgy, which incorporated intertextuality. A nonlinear narrative was taken further to her next working practice that included fragmentising technology. The manipulation of digital archives expanded the notion of intertextuality in her dramaturgy and the aesthetics of conventional mass media as a radical visual collage. Fragmented objects on stage have been used to create computer-generated simulations of reality illuminating the deconstructive acting style. Additionally, Robert Lepage's working practice or morphology was based on the formation of a minimalist collagist imagery used as a metaphorical poetic performance space with cinematic qualities, the dynamic of a coup-de-théâtre and transformational playing. He used an acting system that

promoted the actor as ‘the author-creator’ of the performance text, and the construction of a collective dramaturgy written under the influence of ideas of multi-culturalism. This was taken and developed further in the next phase of his working practice that included totalising technology. The production of effects such as convergence, coherence, fluidity through the use of virtuality, remediation and transcoding manifested a new metaphorical poetic performance space. He has represented a humanised technology through the use of his performers as hybrids generated by theatrical and technological-based factors. Katie Mitchell’s directorial trademarks or morphology included her depiction of decadence and feelings of depression through the use of spacious settings and austere designs. She produced a historically faithful, classic repertoire after meticulous research, and her devotion to the psychological realism acting style and the representation of the social-political implications of the historical events remained remarkably consistent even in the next phase of her working practice that included technological hybridisation. The creation of mood-oriented technological effects expanded the actors’ presence and authority. The play as a series of real-time filmic shots has manifested a new type of subjectivity under the means of mediatisation and expanded the representational possibilities of a classic repertoire. I will provide a full explanation for all these terms later in the chapters.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between theatre art and technology is a complex interdisciplinary topic enriched by the investigations of major theorists, philosophers and sociologists.

There is a large and growing body of literature which has contributed to the conceptualisation of theatrical terms and phenomena. However, I have made several selections in my discussion of the literature focusing on those scholars whose work is of relevance and my thesis explores the extent and significance of their findings. Their findings have influenced my research and analysis and helped me to situate my work in a specific historical and theoretical context.

It is R.L. Rutsky's *High Techne: Art and Technology from the Machine Aesthetic to the Posthuman* on the history of techno-culture which has established my understanding of the implications of the introduction of technology into the arts. [11] Rutsky argues that even though academia has both celebrated and decried the capacity of technology to serve humanity or threaten it, 'little attention has been devoted to possible changes in the conception of technology', or else, 'the definition of technology has remained largely unquestioned'.[12] The fundamental premise of Rutsky's thesis rests on the definition of *technology as 'high techne'*: the primary meaning of the word 'techne' is art, skill and craft - which places it in the sphere of representation, aesthetics and style, rather than solely as a tool or a means to an end. According to Rutsky, the first significant moment in the history of techno-culture was the rise of modernism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when the modernist aesthetics movement connected with the spiritual and technological aspects of the artworks. The second moment was when the reproduction of technology took on its own aesthetic logic

[11] R. L. Rutsky, *High Techne: Art and Technology from the Machine Aesthetic to the Posthuman* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).
[12] Ibid, 2.

beginning to appear autonomous and beyond human control. I trace those moments in the history of theatre directing in order to present a dialectic historiographic approach to the relationship between technology and directing.

Rutsky's explanation of technology as 'high techne' is akin to my attempt to perform a dialectic history, theory and analysis of directing models which use technology, placing technology as a 'high techne' in the conditions of directorial 'representation, aesthetics and style' in the theatrical environment. Rutsky's perspective frames my discussion of the issue of the development of the modern director's role. Specifically, I attempt to discuss how the increasing technologisation of the stage impacts upon the development of directorial identity. My intention is to examine how the finance/financial resources and energy/human effort expended on the application of high technology in modern theatre has a significant effect on directorial practice.

Additionally, I reflect on the critical *historiographies of theatre directing* of Braun, Giesekam and Baugh through a brief panorama of theatre directors in Chapter One.[13] These directors were all inspired by technology in the formation of their directorial identity and search for radical theatricality. I have focused on these important historiographies, not only because they have triggered my enthusiasm for the field during my primary investigation into the history of theatre and performance in relation to technological development, but also and foremost because they have provided the

[13] Edward Braun, *The Director and the Stage* (London: Methuen, 1982); Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen: The Use of Film and Video in Theatre* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Christopher Baugh, *Theatre, Performance and Technology: The Development of Scenography in the Twentieth Century* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

basis for my rationale that directing and technology are historically linked which in all probability is likely to remain so in the immediate future determining the development of the role of the theatre director.[14]

It has been the new generation of media theorists and their approach to cultural phenomena that has informed my idea of developing a specialised theatre theory of directing with technology. As in their case, I aim to provide a re-interpretation of an established cultural form, namely theatre directing, within a new context, i.e. the use of advanced technology. *Theories about new media*, consequently, take a dominant part in this thesis and begin with Lev Manovich's *The Language of New Media* in which he establishes the fundamental notion that digital technology constitutes a new aesthetic apparatus based on forms and evolving processes.[15] Furthermore, Bolter and Grusin's *Remediation* offers the provocative view that the basic characteristic of new media is the fact that it 'remediates' other media.[16] This means that remediation is 'the formal logic by which new media refashion prior media forms' (a type of appropriation).[17] Remediation is the ongoing re-functioning of media, 'a reform in the sense that media reform reality itself'[18] and is when 'one medium is itself incorporated or represented in another medium'.[19]

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[14] For more on this see Timothy J. Wiles, *The Theatre Event: Modern Theories of Performance* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980). The book examines the development of acting theory (theory of the affectivity, theory of catharsis) in the twentieth century.
[15] Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge (Mass.) and London: MIT Press, 2001).
[16] David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge (Mass.) and London: MIT Press, 1996).
[17] Ibid, 273.
[18] Ibid, 61.
[19] Ibid, 45.

Manovich attempts to define the qualities of new media arriving at two positive aspects: unlike analogue media, digital media is not fixed, it is a flexible numerical and modular structure; it also allows for automatisation and variability as well as cultural transcoding, i.e. an object can be automatically transcribed from one sub-genre to another, which, he states, is 'the most substantial consequence of the computerisation of media'.[20] Manovich also argues that new operating systems, media interfaces and software applications can act as representations of older cultural forms or media. For example, he compares new media such as multimedia computing, to cinema, and understands the moving image as an information space. In this way, cinema's density of pictorial displays relates to the density of new media's information displays. Manovich argues that cinema can become a code which can be used to decode the language of new media and to organise data in particular ways, thus new media privileges particular models of reality and of the connection of the technical-human agency.[21]

The innovative qualities of new media have now been transferred to directing and directors seek to include new media's digital aesthetics in their productions. Like Manovich, I will argue that theatre directing based on new media technologies develops (or transcribes) older theatrical systems of directing such as the Wagnerian, Brechtian, and Stanislavskian systems, as I will analyse in Chapters Two, Three and Four. The results show not only that one can observe the privileged by the new media models of directing with technology mediating theatrical aesthetics, but also to associate this phenomenon directly with observations of the developmental role of the theatre director.

[20] Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media*, 45.
[21] Ibid, 16.

Bolter and Grusin's *new media theory* proposes 'the double logic of remediation'. The essential properties of media are *im*mediacy and intimacy. For example, a telephone offers voice immediacy and television the real-time monitoring of world immediacy that provokes the emotion of closeness and presentness. Computers, through graphics, control and interactivity (affective strategies that are engaged with the domain of the real) offering a form of immediacy that also leads to intimacy. Therefore, diverse media (technology-based agents) mediate intimacy. On the other hand, *hyper*mediacy is the effect derived from non-linear, networked paradigms - such as the hypertextual methods of organisation of mediated forms - and multiple acts of representation. As a result, representation is not conceived as a 'window' on the world, but rather as 'windowed' itself, with windows that open on to other representations or other media.[22] Hypermediacy multiplies the signs of mediation trying to reproduce a rich sensorium of human experience. Therefore, while immediacy suggests a unified audiovisual space (to erase the traces of media), hypermediacy offers a heterogeneous audiovisual space (proliferation or multiplication of media).[23] The 'double logic of remediation', according to Bolter and Grusin, is when the desire for immediacy can be achieved even through hypermediacy, or when immediacy depends on hypermediacy. This desire for immediacy can lead users of digital media to borrow avidly from each other, meaning that 'whenever one medium seems to have convinced viewers of its intimacy, another medium will try to appropriate that conviction' (or else remediation). [24]

[22] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 32-33.
[23] Ibid, 45.
[24] Ibid, 33-34 and 221-226.

Building on Bolter and Grusin's theory, I argue that the immediacy of the theatre depends on technological hypermediacy. The directors' desire for immediacy and hypermediacy can lead to their using technology which borrows heavily from the language of theatre and from the canon of theatricality, as well as vice versa. Consequently, a paradigm of 'the double logic of remediation' has been established in the theatrical environment that can test a director. As a result, there is a radical breakthrough in the art of directing: not only the fact that stage technology at work is able to create performance, but also that it is possible that theatrical performance is able to create technology. The demonstration of a 'double logic' informed by Bolter and Grusin's perspectives on the properties of new media is discussed in Chapter One of my thesis.

Additionally, a considerable amount of important literature has been published on *theatre, performance and media technology* analysing their mutual relationship. These have provided fruitful and important information to the challenges that an artist, such as the theatre director, faces in the age of computers, electronics and digital developments. All these studies have noted not only the importance of the conceptualisation of the presence of technology in the theatre, but also how this presence has deeply affected the nature of theatrical and art performance criticism.[25] Even though such critical positions are important expressions of how scholarship interprets contemporary theatre and

[25] Performance theorists such as Richard Schechner provide in-depth analysis of key terms such as the concept of script and performance text. Performance text is what is played and rehearsable, but not necessarily written down and makes no claims to be literature. Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990).

performance, I argue that, because they resonate with certain literature-based assumptions, they implicitly discuss the fundamentals of the use of technology as a key in providing theoretical models of directing. There is still insufficient data related to the implications of the use of technology for the development of the role of the director in comparative perspective and their outcomes are both fragmented and ephemeral.

However, there are a few significant studies that have provided more ground-breaking approaches, such as those by Laurel, Auslander, Giannachi, and Kaye, upon whom I reflect in Chapters Two, Three, and Four.[26] However, it is Steve Dixon and Barry Smith's study that has informed my perspective and resonates the most within the scope of this thesis. Dixon and Smith in *Digital Performance* trace how the evolution of digital media incorporated into live theatre has been historically, ideologically and aesthetically achieved, using a plethora of details and paradigms.[27] Dixon and Smith look at the body, space, time and interactivity which are related to *digital performance*, offering an imaginative original palette of ideas and insights. Particularly Dixon and Smith note that virtual bodies 'are new visual representations of the body, but do not alter the physical composition of their referent flesh and bones.' [28] In this way, they suggest that the virtual body 'is an inherently theatrical entity', since virtual bodily metamorphosis - when the body is transformed, composited or telematically transmitted

[26] Brenda Laurel, *Computers as Theatre* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Professional, 1993); Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999); Gabriella Giannachi, *Virtual Theatres: An introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004); Nick Kaye, *Multi-media: Video-Installation-Performance* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007).
[27] Steve Dixon and Barry Smith, *Digital Performance: A History of New Media in Theater, Dance, Performance Art, and Installation* (Cambridge (Mass.), London: MIT Press, 2007).
[28] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 212.

into digital environments - is not an actual disembodiment, but only an image-based effect with theatrical qualities that enhances how 'bodies embody consciousness'.[29]

According to Dixon and Smith, the use of robots, automata and cyborgs, part-human, part-machine figures on stage, or other 'metal performance' is commonly understood as corresponding to 'the politics and the aesthetics of camp', meaning a distinct place or ideological grouping 'where people share a position or affinity.' The notion is of the metal 'as symbolic of a desirable evolutionary process, via cyborgism, to ultimate machinic embodiment.'[30] This notion I use to support my hypothesis: there is a parallel with the notion of the metal performance, in the emphasis on the artificiality-technological materiality-technological excess (that produces the medialities of technology), as the 'ultimate machinic embodiment', with the notion of theatricality, 'as symbolic of a desirable evolutionary process' in directing, which mediates the 'politics and the aesthetics of a camp' or else a director's theatre (artistic sensibility and style) that marginalises technology and one can find this noticeably in the contemporary theatrical environment. This is explored in more detail in my case studies, in Chapters Two, Three, and Four.

Furthermore, Dixon and Smith describe the media screen as a 'uniquely pliable and poetic space'.[31] Despite the flatness of the screen frame, the projected image offers *more* possibilities than the common three-dimensional theatre space by introducing

[29] Ibid, 212.
[30] Ibid, 273.
[31] Ibid, 335.

another coded sign system to the stage space, which has the effect of both 'stimulating but also complicating the decoding activity of the spectator'.[32] According to Dixon and Smith, stage and screen together create the illusion of either a striking 'marked separation' between times and spaces or 'an illusion of an integration' of time and space. [33] The conjunction of performance and digital imagery produces 'a hybrid form, or a dream quality' and leaves the spectator with an impression of 'in-between-ness' (i.e. a liminal space operating between the screen images and the live performers).[34] I reflect on Dixon and Smith in my respective discussions of the live-digital discourse in theatre and performance among other traditional theatre scholars in Chapter One, and also in the discussion of the cognitive paradigm of theatre, performance and technology in creating an aesthetic theory towards 'a separation or an integration' of theatrical aesthetics.

A theorist whose work has also helped develop my views is Johannes Birringer. Birringer's *Performance, Technology and Science* establishes the premise for the aesthetic understanding of performance within computer-augmented, virtual and networked environments.[35] Focusing on the significance of digital engineering, tactile interface environments, interactive systems, artificial intelligence, telepresence, and bio-art he has established a strong framework for approaching the aesthetics of contemporary performances, looking at how dance and installation art use the techniques of *interaction*. *Interaction* is defined by Birringer as a 'spatio-temporal and

[32] Ibid, 336.
[33] Ibid, 336.
[34] Ibid, 337.
[35] Johannes Birringer, *Performance, Technology and Science* (New York: PAJ Publications, 2008).

architectural concept for performance that maintains a social dimension'. *Interactivity* is a 'collaborative performance with a control system' in which the movement of the performer is tracked by cameras/sensors which are used 'as an input to activate or control other component properties from media such as a video, audio … text, graphics, scanned images'.[36] He also proves that the correlation between aesthetics, technology and science has played a significant part in formulating a paradigmatic shift in artistic creativity. Birringer presents theatre as a reflective medium that reflects other worlds, such as that of technology, something that requires an interdisciplinary examination so as to enable better understanding or drawing conclusions for theoretical models of directing with technology, which corresponds to the main aim of this thesis in Chapter One.

The significant collection of essays called *Intermediality* by the editors Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt puts forward the view that theatre can become 'a stage of *intermediality*' as it can 'incorporate every media to its performance space'.[37] *Intermediality* is associated with 'the blurring of generic boundaries, crossover and hybrid performances' and the 'in-between realities.'[38] 'It is in the intersections and the spaces in-between the intersections that we locate intermediality.'[39] Film, television, video recordings and digital media 'are not only screened, but also at the same time

[36] Ibid, 110.
[37] Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt, eds., *Inter-mediality in Theatre and Performance* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2006).
[38] Ibid, 11.
[39] Ibid, 24.

staged'.[40] In this way 'theatre can be regarded as a *hyper*medium and a home to all'.[41] Stage language traditionally provides the effects of immersion and illusion, transparency and immediacy, through the actuality and the causality of the action, while the media technologies provide 'an intensity of experience,' 'reflexivity of thought'[42] and are characterised by 'hypermediacy',[43] which indicates 'an awareness of the constructed nature of the artwork and the presence of the media in play'.[44] Andy Lavender, in the same collection, extends this notion to directing, suggesting that *mise en scène* not only guarantees the effects of immediacy and pleasure, but also the effects of hypermediacy, additionally linking these concepts with directing. Thus, *mise en scène* suggests 'a sensorium based upon flow, linkage, interaction and simultaneity'.[45] According to Lavender it 'conveys the texture of modern experience in the phenomenal sense'.[46] He perceives this hypermediacy of staging as giving 'both structure and texture to the creation of *mise en scène*'.[47]

The focal point of the *Intermediality* editors opens the way to an examination of the concepts of mediality, multi-mediality and inter-mediality in theatre directing, which I discuss in Chapter One. However, the editors also provide grounds for extending to the theoretical implications of theatrical aesthetics, theatricality and dramatic effects. The major contribution of this approach is that the formulation of the

[40] Ibid, 37.
[41] Ibid, 24.
[42] Ibid, 37.
[43] Ibid, 38.
[44] Ibid, 56.
[45] Ibid, 63-64.
[46] Ibid, 63.
[47] Ibid, 62.

conceptual framework of the notion of inter-mediality has been developed by theatre practice itself, providing an example of how theatre and performance scholarship generates theatre and performance theory not only from developing processes that stem from theatre itself, but also those which stem from the presence of technology on stage. My thesis aspires to contribute in this direction.

Tracy Davis and Thomas Postlewait's *Theatricality* and David Krasner and David Z. Saltz's *Staging Philosophy* discuss the challenges an strategies for facilitating the promotion of the concept of theatricality and the linking of theatre with philosophy, providing solid arguments which have helped me to establish a theoretical framework for Chapters Two, Three and Four.[48] *Theatricality*, according to Davis and Postlewait, works 'exclusively as a specific type of a performance style or inclusively as all the semiotic codes of theatrical representation'.[49] They claim that theatricality has attained the status of both an aesthetic and philosophical system. They go on to state that historically the 'mimetic conundrum'[50] implies that 'mimesis may not mislead, because when caught up by it the actors and the spectators agree to forgo truth'.[51] Modernist theatre, claim Davis and Postlewait, has created a new theatricalism (or theatricality) in the architectural components of the *mise en scène*.[52] Additionally, Krasner and Saltz argue that 'the critical link that holds theater and philosophy together is the act of

[48] Tracy C. Davis and Thomas Postlewait, eds., *Theatricality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); David Krasner and David Z. Saltz, eds., *Staging Philosophy: Intersections of Theater, Performance, and Philosophy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006).
[49] Davis and Postlewait, eds., *Theatricality*, 1.
[50] Aristotle states that 'poiesis' (artistic production) is defined as 'mimesis' (imitation or representation) of 'praxis' (action). For more on mimesis see Aristotle's *Poetics*, translation and commentary by Stephen Halliwell (London: Duckworth, 1987).
[51] Davis and Postlewait, eds., *Theatricality*, 6.
[52] Ibid, 12.

seeing'[53] and that these, *theatre and philosophy*, take us 'beyond the empirical level to involve us in a pursuit of truth as an unconcealment process.'[54]

The work of Davis and Postlewait (on the mimesis that mediates theatricality), and Krasner and Saltz (on the act of seeing that produces theatricality) indicate that in order to draw conclusions following my hypothesis about the relationship of directing and technology, I have to examine some of the causes of the presence of technology and its effects on directing, the production of meaning and the production of theatricality. It is important to understand how this 'pursuit of a perceived truth' can help to develop a 'staging philosophy'. I reflect on the concept of theatricality in a critical engagement with the notions of directing and technology, identifying technology and directing as natural allies in the search by theatre directors for this staging philosophy.

Related to my thesis are the renowned theories of McLuhan on media as extensions of the human body, Deleuze and Guattari on the machinic phylum, Baudrillard on simulation, Lyotard on technological determinism, Haraway on cyborgs, and Hayles on posthumanism, all of which provide key tropes or an intellectual agenda, in the sense of relevant *theoretical-philosophical*, and *socio-political* and *cultural* cases.[55] These indicate a relationship between technology and art, therefore contributing

[53] Krasner and Saltz, eds., *Staging Philosophy*, 3.
[54] Ibid, 3.
[55] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man* (Corte Madera, CA: Gingko Press, 2003; 1964); G. F. Deleuze, and F. Guattari, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Anti-Oedipus* (London: Continuum, 1983); Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton and Philip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext[e], 1983); Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. G. Bennington and B. Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989); Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association

to the development of my thoughts - especially in the first phases of this project. The work of these theorists has inspired theoretical and critical discourses within the academic disciplines related to the philosophical aspects of the interrelationships between technology, science, society, culture and the arts. However, given the limited parameters of this study I decided not to investigate the sociological and political parameters of the role of technology extensively, but to focus almost exclusively on the implications and repercussions of the work of theorists who have primarily been working within the world of theatrical performance having been specifically occupied with issues which concern theatre directors. This is because the central point of my research has been the study of the work of theatre directors who have used technological agents in their expression of a developmental director's theatre.

I will now briefly introduce and highlight the importance of Baz Kershaw's notion of *Theatre Ecology*, which explores how theatre, performance and ecology may work together according to the same principles.[56] Kershaw's work, as has been the case with the previous authors, has also helped me to pinpoint the discursive elements within my field of research and has demonstrated how scholarship can create a renewed sense of the theatre as a forum for vibrant discussion/debate 'in the age of digital reproduction'.[57]

Books, 1991); Kathrin N. Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature and Informatics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

[56] Baz Kershaw, *Theatre Ecology: Environments and Performance Events* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[57] I borrow this term from the essay by the artist and art critic Douglas Davis, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Digital Reproduction (An Evolving Thesis: 1991-1995),' *Leonardo* 28. 5 (1995): 381-386.

Kershaw has investigated the *ecological* qualities of the theatrical phenomenon. According to Kershaw, the interrelationships between all the factors of particular theatrical or performance systems resemble those which can be found in ecology, and can be expressed in ecological terms which refer to the interrelationships between theatre and its environments. 'Hence "ecology" fundamentally emphasises the inseparable and reflexive interrelational and interdependent qualities of systems *as* systems, however their individual components may be defined.'[58] He suggests that there are structural ecological principles common to the cultural and natural realms that are homologous because they emerged through similar shared or overlapping performance systems which he calls the 'performance commons'.[59] For Kershaw, words and terms adapt to theatrical environments and change their behaviour. He perceives homologies when two or more sets of relational components manifest common patterns when they are compared.[60]

Inspired by Kershaw's excellent paradigm, in Chapter One, I carry out an analogous exercise in drawing parallels in order to illuminate the theatrical phenomenon of directing with technology and to shed light on the activities/attitudes of the directors. The basic principles of this position might seem somewhat arbitrary, but I argue that many theories have arisen out of such seemingly random foundations. I describe and classify specific terms: fragmentary technology, totalising technology, and technological hybridisation that illustrate how the development in the role of the

[58] Baz Kershaw, *Theatre Ecology*, 16.
[59] 'The secret of intra - and inter - species phenotype effects is in homologies resulting from ecosystemic performance commons rather than in analogies based on quasi-scientific physical entities'. Ibid, 21.
[60] Ibid, 18.

theatrical director is associated with technology to such a degree that indicates that the concepts can be identified with ecology. One can spot essential connections of great importance in the principles of the theatrical system. Reflecting on Kershaw's paradigm I deploy the term 'ecology' as both a metaphor and a theoretical model for examining the complex relationship between technology and directing. Directors adapt to a changing theatrical environment, in which technology plays an important role. Hence 'inseparable, reflexive interrelational and interdependent qualities' of the directorial system and the use of technology, as 'performance commons' that emerge in the theatrical environment can be defined. This 'homology' produces multiple perspectives which can be used to adequately understand and interpret the developmental role of the theatre director and the directing models that have emerged through the use of technology.

LIMITATIONS

For reasons of length, this study has excluded: a detailed description of software and hardware systems, computing and networks (protocols) created by artists and computer engineers such as the paradigms of LifeForms (3D modelling character animation software in motion), Alias Animator (earlier visual effects and animation software), Isadora (software for real-time manipulation of digital video through movement, formerly BigEye), Poser (3D animation program that depicts human figures in pose with an optimum realism), Max/MSP/Jitter (graphical environment for sound

and video interactive projects), VideoTrace (3D modelling via video frames) and many more, even though they are valuable means of comprehending directing practice.[61] In the same way, a presentation of dance artists and choreographers, who have shaped the aesthetics of western art and whose works have highlighted the role of technology has been excluded, even though their contribution to the development of dance and technology is enormous, to give but one example the seminal work of choreographer Merce Cunningham.[62] Media and visual artists, such as Marcel Duchamp are similarly omitted.[63] Performance artists, in spite of the fact that their creativity in blending technology with body art has been a huge inspiration in the theatrical environment and has challenged the canon-forming performative processes, as has been evident in the performance work of Orlan, Stelarc, Guillermo Gömez-Peña, Meredith Monk, Ping Chong, and Bob Ashley have been omitted.[64] Traditional critical discourses have been

[61] For more on this see Gavin Carver and Colin Beardon, eds., *New Visions in Performance: The Impact of Digital Technologies Innovations in Art and Design* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2004), 26. For more on the MOO environment see Stephen Alan Schrumm, ed. *Theatre in Cyberspace: Issues of Teaching, Acting and Directing* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 109-157. The presentation of interaction design in digital media, mixed reality, mobile technologies and other advanced technological means have taken place in conferences that I have participated such as: *CCID 2006: First International symposium on Culture, Creativity and Interaction Design*, at Queen Mary, University of London, London, 12 September, 2006. Personal notes; *Sensual Technologies Conference.* Centre for Contemporary and Digital Research. ICA, London, 27 June, 2008. Personal notes; *(Re) Actor: First International Conference on Digital Live Art*, Queen Mary, University of London, London, 11 September, 2006. Personal notes.

[62] Roger Copeland, *Merce Cunningham: The Modernizing of Modern Dance* (London: Routledge, 2004); Martha Bremser, ed., *Fifty Contemporary Choreographers* (London: Routledge, 1999); Susan Sontag, *Cage, Cunningham, Johns: Dancers on a Plane* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf , 1990).

[63] Linda Dalrymple Henderson, *Duchamp in Context: Science and Technology in the Large Glass and Related Works* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Jean-François Lyotard, *Duchamp's Transformers*, trans. Ian McLeod Venice, CA.: Lapis Press, 1990 [1977]). See also the influential work of Nam June Paik, Jeffrey Shaw and Bill Viola.

[64] On the subject of the body and technology see Susan Broadhurst and Josephine Machon, eds., *Sensualities/Textualities and Technologies: Writings of the Body in 21st Century Performance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). Broadhurst and Machon in their anthology focus on 'textualities' (performance writing) that are indebted to 'sensual writings of the body' in virtual performance exploring the tensions between the physical and the virtual; Susan Kozel, *Closer: Performance, Technologies, Phenomenology* (Cambridge (Mass.) and London: MIT Press, 2008). Kozel uses Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology to explain the social, ethical, and political implications of her own performance (dance

largely omitted [65] with the exception of some inescapable key frame-references of critical concepts, such as the epochs and *zeitgeist* of modernism, postmodernism and post-postmodernism with their implications for theatre art and technology which feature in the introductory chapter of this thesis.[66]

The current study was not specifically designed to thoroughly analyse factors related to sociological, political and economical readings on technology, such as Marxist criticism (technology as a 'problem'), the Frankfurt school of Marxist aesthetics (which combines Freudian psychoanalysis and Marx) with philosophers such as Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno or close readings of the French school of socio-cultural philosophers, such as the post-structuralists Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, and the media theorists Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, etcetera, or to examine the *literature* which has references to futuristic imaginary perceptions of technology, from the work of William Gibson,[67] to the analysis of *plays*, which display

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and digital technology); Caroline A. Jones, ed., *Sensorium: Embodied Experience, Technology, and Contemporary Art* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 2006). Jones explores historically technological artworks which have extended the senses and revitalised the overall sensorial system.

[65] I acknowledge that especially in the case of LeCompte and Lepage an extended bibliography exists related to these issues. For more on this see Chapter Two and Three. A range of studies on theories regarding the appearance of modernism, postmodernism and post-postmodermism in the theatre have helped me to understand the socio-political context within which the theatre directors developed their role. For more on this see Johannes Birringer, *Theatre, Theory, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1991); Johannes Birringer, *Media and Performance: Along the border* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Michael Vanden Heuvel, *Performing Drama/Dramatizing Performance: Alternative Theatre and the Dramatic Text* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991); Philip Auslander, *Presence and Resistance: Postmodernism and Cultural Politics in Contemporary American Performance* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1992); Nick Kaye, *Postmodernism and Performance* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

[66] Since the late 1990s there have been few formal attempts by cultural theorists to define and name the epoch succeeding postmodernism. See Garry Potter and Jose Lopez, eds., *After Postmodernism: An Introduction to Critical Realism* (London: The Athlone Press, 2001), 4.

[67] Dani Cavallaro, *Cyberpunk and Cyberculture: Science Fiction and the Work of William Gibson* (London: The Athlone Press, 2001).

explicitly futuristic elements, such as for example *Gas I* (1918) by Georg Kaiser,[68] *Masses and Man* (1921) by Ernst Toller,[69] *The Bedbug* (1929) and *The Bathhouse* (1930) by Vladimir Mayakovsky,[70] even though their contribution has been invaluable to this thesis, during at the first stages of my research.[71] My analysis, however, will include insights from the theorists of postmodernism Jean-François Lyotard and Jean Baudrillard.

These limitations are related to my choice to adopt a different strategy in my analysis for approaching theatre theory, based on the notion of *practical theorising* proposed by Julian Meyrick. Meyrick states that practical theorising is drawn from theatre practice itself, which is 'inextricably enmeshed in wider, on-going ethical, political and professional concerns.'[72] Consequently, this thesis' rationale, compatible with Meyrick's views, is concerned with a theory *of* theatre rather than a theory *about* theatre.[73] This requires, according to Meyrick, a 'focus to theatre as a professional whole, not just a bundle of cultural specific aesthetics.'[74] Consequently, the material selected for this thesis is derived directly from the rich theatre territory itself, and is

[68] Georg Kaiser, *Gas (I)*, trans. Herman Scheffauer (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1957).
[69] Ernst Toller, *Seven Plays: Masses and Man*, trans. Hermann Kesten (New York: Howard Fertig, 1991), 107-154.
[70] Vladimir Mayakovsky, *Plays*, trans. Guy Daniels (Evaston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1968).
[71] For more on these dramatic forms see Dragan Klaić, *The Plot of the Future: Utopia and Dystopia in Modern Drama* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press: 1991).
[72] Julian Meyerick, 'The limits of theory: Academic versus Professional Understanding of Theatre Problems.' *New Theatre Quarterly* 19. 3, 2003: 233.
[73] Ibid: 232.
[74] Ibid: 240.

based on paradigmatic models of directing.[75] This specialised theatre theory incorporates crucial questions about theatrical forms and the role of the director indicating how this can renew our interest in technology *per se*, since theatre theory becomes a kernel element for interpreting technology's implications in the theatre.

Theatre theories are based on practice, with their established aesthetic properties and have distinctive features as a discipline. Theories of dramatic literature or the socially-based or societal critical discourses, together with theatre theories, are appropriate for understanding details about directors' choices and comprehending a directors' technophile theatrical aesthetics overall. Therefore, in my analysis of three directing models, as applied by Elizabeth LeCompte, Robert Lepage and Katie Mitchell respectively, I begin from canonical theatre theories such as the Wagnerian theory of total theatre, the Stanislavskian acting system, the Brechtian theory of the 'theatre of estrangement',[76] that provides the 'alienation effect',[77] in order to find metaphorical resemblances or 'homologous ecological principles'. My intention is that by applying those aesthetical and historical norms of theatre theory I can suggest a strategy for

[75] For example Shomit Mitter exposes twentieth century systems of the process of rehearsal, focusing on acting theories, with reference to the directorial development of Peter Brook. Shomit Mitter, *Systems of Rehearsal: Stanislavsky, Brecht, Grotowski, and Brook* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992).

[76] According to the estrangement effect the bodies on stage 'are never just given and natural, but on the contrary are made and remade, framed and reframed.' In: Alan Ackerman and Martin Puchner, 'Introduction: Modernism and Anti-Theatricality', in *Against Theatre: Creative Destructions on the Modernist Stage*, Alan Ackerman and Martin Puchner, eds., (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 7.

[77] According to Josette Féral the 'alienation' effect (Verfremdungseffekt) is 'a process by which both theatrical and extra-theatrical phenomena are rendered strange, forcing the spectator to adopt a critical distance with regard to that which is given to see and hear.' Josette Féral and Ron Bermingham 'Alienation Theory in Multi-Media Performance', *Theatre Journal* 39. 4 (1987): 461. 'In addition, alienation effect cannot be dissociated from a larger project that aims at social reform, a project that requires the participation of an in-formed spectator interacting with new and imaginative textual material. If either the social project, the spectator, or the text is missing, the process of alienation is inoperative.' Ibid: 462. 'Alienation gives the narrative a dialectical organization in which external conditions interrupt, imposing seemingly contradictory forces upon linearly unfolding narrative processes.' Ibid: 467.

interpreting a technological director's theatre which would put the issue of theatricality (reception) and theatrical aesthetics (production, style, codes) in the centre of the analysis of the role of technology in the director's theatre, as well as the implications for the theories of mediality, multi-mediality and inter-mediality. Therefore, my attempt to provide an argument on the phenomenon of directing and technology is situated in the expansion and development of existing theatre theories. I argue that this type of theoretical construct is the most pertinent for organising the data related to the research question and that in this way this thesis makes a significant contribution to the body of theatre studies.

Even though the symptoms of this wide-ranging directorial practice can be found in the work of other directors, such as Romeo Castellucci, this research has focussed on LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell as they demonstrate a fundamental tension in their directing between technology and theatrical factors more effectively than others. The process by which they developed their directing through the use of technology is more noticeable and continuous than other directors providing evidence not only of the turning points in their artistic development, but also of radical change in their directorial methods following their clear alignment with technology. More than other directors, the mechanisms of representation that are bound to their directorial identity and artistic signature show their preference for the use of technology as the most functional, effective and truthful means of making theatre compositions for audiences more complex.

HOW MY RESEARCH FURTHERS WORK BY OTHERS

With the general growth of digital work in many academic fields, film-media theory, and visual culture studies, it is hardly surprising that the relationship between *theatre, performance and technology* has attracted considerable attention in recent years. In an attempt to go beyond dystopian assumptions about how media and technology dominate/ control humanity, studies have focused on everything from history surrounding avant-garde, multi-media theatre, technology-infused performance work to aspects of postmodern theory, philosophy and aesthetics. While some research has focused only on the documentation of performances and the description of aesthetic differences between the features of theatre, performance and media art, other work has sought to show how these differences both reflect and produce social-political ideology. My thesis aspires to be part of this later theatre and performance studies discourse.

My argument is that theatre directing with technology does important things towards the conceptualisation of a new theatricality, especially in today's era of digital reproduction. This thesis is an effort to theorise the relationship between individuals (directors), materials (technology) and environment (theatre) in order to promote an aesthetical canon (theatricality). Clearly there is a scope here for a great deal more research that: is based on empirical data of the latest productions, operates with a

complex understanding of technology's and theatre's relationship, looks specifically at the contexts of use of technology by the directors, rather than assuming on broad genre/aesthetics-based differences. It also involves more the work by the directors on appreciating the medialities of technology, aims not only to describe and explain, but also to change the language and the scope of understanding theatre directing. I argue that this kind of approach corresponds to the main aim of this thesis which is to unveil the complex dimensions of the developmental directorial identity in theatre, always subject to change in accordance with the historical moment.

I differ from other theorists in my focus on the particular relationship between technology and theatre directing. I provide a theatre theory using technological directing models including a taxonomy-classification which can help in describing and examining the significant role of technology in the development of the theatre director. So far, there has been little discussion about a more concrete or homogenous understanding of directorial models from the point of view of the technological medium, since the theatrological research to date has tended to focus solely on the historical or normative ways of analysing directing, which has been concerned with text, language relations and dramaturgy, reception (theatre reviewing), traditional performance aspects related to acting/scenography, or critical theories. This thesis aspires to further the research carried out by theatre and performance scholars in this area of *theatre, performance and technology*, where there is a different perspective on theatre criticism which focuses on the possibilities offered by technology for directing. My research furthers the area by

explicitly showing how the use of technology can favour and develop the director's art within the theatrical environment.[78]

The thesis intends to address the imbalance in this area of scholarship selecting, comparing and interpreting the data required for the development of explicit *models of directing* with technology in the same way that the Stanislavskian, Brechtian, Brookian, Grotowskian systems etcetera, reexamined models of directing with specific acting systems.[79] My contribution is that I clearly relate the evolution of directing (of three specific avant-garde directors whose work is compared for the first time under this point of view) not only through acting styles and systems, choices of repertory and plays (traditional theatre studies analysis and therefore a micro-level influence between key and existing power-hierarchy theatrical factors), modernist or postmodernist theatrical aesthetics or aspects of ideology and critical theories (embedded in the history of culture and society analysis and, therefore, a macro-level sphere of influence), as other researchers have already done, but from theorising the relationship between the art of the director in the theatre and their behaviour towards the medialities of the technologically-generated material (and, therefore, a more constructivist analysis based on the immediate environment of the course of the directorial action and a new type of

[78] I reflect here on the way that technology has influenced the development of philosophy. For example, Jay Bolter (Georgia Institute of Technology, US) and Andrew Feenberg (Simon Fraser University, Canada) developed their views on philosophy of technology and culture in *CCID 2006: The First International Symposium on Culture, Creativity and Interaction Design* at Queen Mary, University of London, London, September 12, 2006. Personal notes.

[79] Stanislavsky reexamined realism as formerly expressed by the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen; Brecht reexamined epic theatre as expressed by Piscator; Brook reexamined ritualistic and martial exercises as expressed by Kathakali and Kalarippayattu; and Grotowski reexamined psycho-physical training as expressed by Stanislavsky's teaching. For more on this see Alison Hodge, *Twentieth Century Actor Training* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 16-29, 102-107, 178- 190, and 198-20.

micro-meso-level influence that provides a theoretical premise).[80] I have to acknowledge that I bring to the narrative of this thesis my personal interests as a director and theatre studies scholar. As Russell says 'the ground of necessity arises from the nature of the mind which experiences.'[81] My desire is to provide the strongest proof for a hypothesis in the controversial field of directing with technology which will facilitate an interpretation of the role of the director. Therefore, this thesis aims to contribute to an area of academic debate a re-evaluation of the relation between directing and technology where theatre scholarship is able to contribute significantly to knowledge in favour of the notion of technology, rather than asserting to technophobia, which, after all, isolates the work of theatre scholars from that of the practitioners.

METHODOLOGY

Sarah Bay-Cheng has put forward a need for an alternative model of studying staged productions:

> As we write, watch, and teach theatre, awareness of and familiarity with mediated performance must become part of our theatrical vocabulary.[82]

In order to better understand what theatrical artists are doing I started to study the language of technology and media in the theatre. For this reason I attended courses for

[80] Like Marranca has done mutatis mutandis with the 'theatre of images' of Robert Wilson, Richard Foreman and Lee Breuer in Bonnie Marranca, ed., *The Theatre of Images* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.)
[81] B. Russell, *An Essay on the Foundations of Geometry* (London: Routledge, 1996; c. 1897), 179.
[82] Sarah Bay-Cheng, 'Theatre Squared: Theatre History in the Age of Media', *Theatre Topics* 17. 1 (2007): 47. For more on the mediated performance see Chapter One.

three years in Contemporary Media Art,[83] lighting design[84] and sound design,[85] production management.[86] I had fruitful and informative conversations with specialists on stage management,[87] technical design/production, [88] and mechanical design for theatre applications.[89] I also attended courses on philosophy,[90] film theory,[91] performance,[92] visionary theatre[93] and theatre directing.[94] I participated in relevant conferences[95] and I became a regular member of 'The Thursday Club', a series of seminars on visual arts and computing.[96] This specialised training in the practical aspects of technical/technological theatre and performance helped me to acknowledge not only the history of the material practices, but also how these had been applied creatively by the theatre directors.

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[83] Gail Pearce, *Contemporary Media Art*. Lecture notes. Egham, Media Arts Department, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2005-2007 and 2008-2009.
[84] Nick Hunt, *Lighting Design*. Lecture notes. Egham, Drama and Theatre Department, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2005-2006.
[85] Rhys Davis, *Sound Design*. Lecture notes. Egham, Media Arts Department, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2006-2007.
[86] Elizabeth Cardone, *Production Management*. Lecture notes. New Haven, Drama School, Yale University, 2007-2008.
[87] Such as Mary Hunter who is the Chair of Stage Management in the Drama School at Yale University.
[88] Such as Bronislaw Sammler who is the Chair of Technical Design and Production in the Drama School at Yale University.
[89] Such as Alan Hendrickson who is a tutor of Mechanical Design for Theatre Applications in the Drama School at Yale University.
[90] Katalin Balog, *Philosophy of Mind*. Lecture notes. New Haven, Philosophy Department, Yale University, 2007-2008.
[91] Millicent Marcus, *Film Theory*. Lecture notes. New Haven, Film Studies Department, Yale University, 2007-2008.
[92] Joseph Roach, *World Performance*. Lecture notes. New Haven, Theater Studies and English Department, Yale University, 2007-2008.
[93] Daniel Larham, *Visionary Theater*. Lecture notes. New Haven, Theater Studies Department, Yale University, 2007-2008.
[94] Chris Megson, *Directing*. Lecture notes. Egham, Drama and Theatre Department, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2005-2006. David Bramley, *Directing*. Lecture notes. Egham, Drama and Theatre Department, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2005-2006.
[95] Notably the *Robert Lepage Conference*, organised by the University of Manchester, Birkbeck Centre for Canadian Studies at Birkbeck, University of London, and the Canada House (Canada Embassy in London), London, 2-3 June, 2006.
[96] *Digital Studios* directed by Profs. Janis Jefferies and Robert Zimmer at Goldsmiths, University of London. Personal notes.

I will briefly refer to a number of methodological choices that I made in several stages of this research that defined the area of my investigation. My thesis is interdisciplinary, and as a result, in terms of methodology, it must borrow from performance practice, theory and history. Working synthetically is very challenging for a theatre scholar, especially when one researches a phenomenon as complex as technology, which, because there is not yet a fully established vocabulary, requires new terms to describe and reflect its fragility. The technical phenomena are very recent in the history of directing and specialised scholarship is limited accordingly. As a result, as a theatre scholar I had to take some risks, since this area is not a conventional one in theatre studies and scholarship is at an early stage of development.

My methodology is composed of the examination of theoretical discussions about theatre directing and the historiography of the use of technology by the directors in the theatre. Directing models, such as the theory of the Wagnerian total theatre, Brechtian theatre, Stanislavskian theatre, all relate to types of director's theatre, and have helped in theorising, categorising and creating a useful taxonomy of the techno-directing/directing with technology genre. I compare the work of three prestigious directors whose common ground is their use of technology in their directing. In this way I can theoretically examine what I have experienced in the theatre and, as a result, be better able to comprehend the unfamiliarity (out of the norm and the mainstream) of what I have witnessed and to grasp the references and the boundaries of the subject-

matter. As Wolfgang Iser has stated, theory 'confronts us with the paradoxical urge to capture in cognitive terms something which by nature eludes cognition.'[97]

Using the notions of mediality, multi-mediality and inter-mediality as they are linked to technology, has provided me with a specific rationale on how theatre scholarship can offer insight into the phenomenon of a change or a shift in the development of the role of the director, by mediating a director's theatre through a 'techno-aesthetics' (a director's theatre through technology-related aesthetics, what I choose to term 'techno-aesthetics'). Therefore, I do not focus on media theory *per se*, even though I borrow its language, but on an idea of the medialities of technology in theatre directing. Briefly, *mediality* is when a director uses specific theatrical media (mediators) to contribute to theatricality, which is the relationship between the stage and the audience. *Multi-mediality* is a form of mediality in which the director uses multiple technological media as mediators, for example light, sound and video, with the intention of expanding the world of the play and enhancing theatricality. *Inter-mediality* is a form of multi-mediality in which the director uses inter-medial technologies as mediators, computer-generated imagery based on the structures of digital technology, in order to mediate theatrical aesthetics via inter-medial dramatic effects to expand the stage language and, as a result, the theatricality as well. This thesis explores the extent and the significance of these concepts and what they have brought about in techno-directing.

[97] Wolfgang Iser, *How to do Theory* (How to Study Literature) (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005), 171.

In addition to this, based on archival resources and performances that I had attended, I compiled a list of contemporary directors who showed a sustained interest in this particular field.[98] However, it was apparent that the number of practitioners in the subject area of directing and technology was too broad, so I chose three practitioners to examine as case-studies: the American director Elizabeth LeCompte, the Canadian director Robert Lepage, and the British director Katie Mitchell, were the starting point for my analysis. The later did not begin with their early careers but rather at the phase when there was an explicit manifestation of the extensive influence of technology on their directing. I have chosen these three directors, because each one has demonstrated a distinguished directorial role and/or a director's theatre inextricably related to technology and media in a key era: LeCompte since the mid-1980s; Lepage since the mid-1990s and Mitchell since the mid-2000s. As a consequence, I can detect the directorial trajectories, the moments of rupture and the turning points in technological directing at different key time-periods to illustrate and support the thesis.

The three directors are based in North America (LeCompte in New York, Lepage in Québec) and Europe (Mitchell in London) and reflect a Western approach to technological progress and its implications for the art of theatre. They also reflect the repercussions on contemporary directing of the predominant theatrical directorial systems developed within this Western theatrical tradition - Wagnerian, Stanislavskian, Brechtian - and the tradition of criticism which developed around them. Using this context as a starting point, I investigate how the medium of technology affects

[98] Performances that I have attended in London, Athens, Berlin, Frankfurt, Amsterdam and New York, since 2005.

director's theatre, and how theatrical systems have the potential to inform us about 'the question of technology' in the theatrical environment.[99] Therefore, in spite of the differences in terms of style between the three directors, my intention is to show how the examination of the technological premise in their directing has led me to propose some simple directorial patterns or models of directing with technology, and to chart how and why the development of their directorial roles shares similar features. Therefore, a mutual relation between the research material and the formulation of my argument was built through these methodological choices.

My secondary material is composed of magazines, journals and newspapers, both printed and online, containing critical reviews and interviews of the directors/artists and in order to trace their reception from critics/audience. There were also documents, theatre programmes, prompt books, director's notes, production books, and other resource material, such as photographs and audiovisual material of the productions found at London's National Theatre Archives, The London Theatre Museum,[100] the New York Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, the Beinecke Yale University Library and internet sites together with interviews of the directors which addressed questions about their recent media-based work.[101]

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[99] I reflect here on the famous Martin Heidegger essay 'The question concerning technology', written in 1936 (published in 1954), on the question of the humanity's being with technology. For more on this see Chapter One. D. F. Krell, ed., *Basic writings: Martin Heidegger* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 287-317.

[100] Victoria and Albert Museum, The National Video Archive of Performance in London.

[101] Katie Mitchell's interviews held at the Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London, London, 14 October 2008 and at Young Vic, London, 16 April 2009, in which I participated with questions. For more on this see Chapter Four.

Key scenes from their productions have been chosen because they manifest the workings of an ecology between technology and theatrical directing. They also signal the three different directorial approaches to the question concerning technology in the theatrical environment. Specifically I have chosen key scenes from *Hamlet* (New York, 2007)[102] to structure my analysis on LeCompte's directing model, examples from *Lipsynch* (Newcastle, 2007 and London, 2008)[103] for my analysis on Lepage and scenes from *Attempts on her Life* (London, 2007)[104] for the case study of Mitchell's paradigm. However, in order to make just comparisons I have attended all their productions performed since 2005 (in the UK, New York and Athens). The reasons for referring to these performances are, first, because I regard the chosen productions as appropriate for a further discussion of this study's central concerns. Second, they have not yet been analysed extensively by theatre scholars, and there are not many comparative studies among them – this is a gap my analysis seeks to address, thereby reflecting the originality of my work. Third, a further reason lies in the value of primary research, since I have not only personally attended all these latest productions more than once, but I have also witnessed the whole theatre-making process, especially in the case of the director Katie Mitchell.

[102] *Hamlet*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Elizabeth LeCompte. The Wooster Group. The Public Theater, New York, 8-9 November, 2007. Performance.
[103] *Lipsynch*. By Robert Lepage, et. al. Dir. Robert Lepage. Ex Machina, Festival Trans Amériques and Théâtre sans Frontières. Northern Stage, Newcastle, 19-14 February, 2007 and at Barbican Theatre, London, 7-14 September, 2008. Performance.
[104] *Attempts on her Life*. By Martin Crimp. Dir. Katie Mitchell. Royal National Theatre. Royal National Theatre, Lyttelton, London, 14 March-10 May, 2007. Performance.

As mentioned before in the case of Katie Mitchell I had the great opportunity to attend the rehearsals of *The Waves* (in 2008) at the National Theatre and *After Dido* (in 2008) at the Young Vic.[105] My observations of the rehearsal process and the conclusions related to my subject area, which were drawn after prolific discussions with the director and other collaborators such as the stage manager Laura Thatcher, the scenographer Vicki Mortimer and the actors and opera singers, will be included in the relevant chapter of this thesis. The process of rehearsing is a vital part of the theatrical history. Therefore observations derived from Mitchell's rehearsal process additionally validate the originality of my study since they are based on empirical work that has not been undertaken before, which contributes to the contemporary theatre history.[106]

This thesis raises some questions regarding methodology. When a theatre scholar is researching the contemporary there are no limits to the extent of the documentation of the technology-assisted theatrical performance. Consequently, what are the means with which the scholar is researching and interpreting a continuously evolving theatrical piece, 'a work in progress', as well as, continuously evolving technological-generated applications? The wider research rationale of this thesis aims to shatter ideological prejudices regarding institutional-traditional methodologies in theatre scholarship and to re-evaluate the ways in which theatre staging is conceived by scholars. This re-

[105] I am grateful to Ms Katie Mitchell for the permission to observe her rehearsals. I would like also to seize the opportunity to thank Ms Laura Thatcher, Mitchell's stage manager, as well as Ms Vicky Mortimer, the set designer, and the actors for addressing so willingly my questions during rehearsals.

[106] What I have observed and measured according to critical empiricism (philosophical-methodological theory) will provide the ability to theoretically recognise directing models. In this way my theory will be tested within the context of the facts-performances. Or else, this evidence will be subjected to criticism, which will contribute to the evaluation of the directing models. However this method, direct manipulation and observation, emphasises the importance of multiple observations of directors' work through time.

evaluation indicates a latent, but important way in which extant theatre scholarship might contribute to the evolution of the art of theatre. I, therefore, suggest that the quest for a new cross-language based on art/theatre and science/technology will lead to the formation of a visionary theatre scholarship for postmillennial theatre directing which will be truly multi-disciplinary. As Birringer has put it 'we need historians who can create a critical context for the analysis of hybrid systems of organisation.'[107]

PARAMETERS OF THE STUDY

Recent research studies on directing have been largely based upon the hypothesis that directing is something mystical or mysterious which is difficult to analyse. Most discussions of directors' visions that have dominated the field for many years have a tendency to retreat into these mystical or mysterious qualities. However, theatre professionals, such as directors, who articulate such visions, aspirations, purpose to achieve something, are not 'magicians', but rather talented artists, multiple-faceted thinkers, theatre professionals that lead their work strategically, who are bold and willing to take risks. Therefore, the fact that this kind of directing (by embedding tehnology) in actual theatre practice does indeed require a certain charisma or a flair for ingenuity, does not mean it is impossible or unfeasible to conceive and analyse such directing despite an increased degree of considerable difficulty entailed in this process.

[107] Johannes Birringer, *Performance, Technology and Science*, xvi.

Effective directorial visions usually consist of already well-tried ideas, such as in the case of Stanislavsky and Brecht who have managed to create distinguished acting systems by refining former well-established theatrical practices (for example realism or epic theatre). What is crucial about a director's vision is not merely its originality, but how well it serves the aesthetic interests of playwrights, actors, artistic collaborators and audiences, and how this can be translated into a realistic strategy, namely staging. A director's work is to look for talented people or intriguing materials and as a result to expose these professionals to a theatrical experience that will develop these collaborators' creative potential, which has as an outcome of a theatricality that sensitises the audience. In the case of directing with technology, I argue that visions and strategies can be translated or decoded extending the theatre theory of the time. My discussion of the phenomenon of directing with technology has as a starting point the research gap created by some of the limitations of existing theatre scholarship and this thesis aspires to make a contribution to further study.

Negative criticism of the use of technology in the theatrical environment assumes that many artists have been notoriously unsuccessful in utilising technology and in making it socially acceptable. They take for granted that this type of work is condemned to remain at an experimental level, useful as providing mental stimuli for thinking, but unable to step out of pompous self-indulgence and pretentiousness. It is true that the plethora of examples in the theatre have attracted descriptions which range from mediocre to disastrous. But is this enough to reject it as entirely unrelated to an aesthetical orthodoxy (theatrical canon) in interpreting theatre?

Dixon indicates the nature of the problem by focusing on digital technology:

> Against the background of activity in the application of digital technologies within performance practice, the idea of computational "fakeness" has ensured an equal and opposite reaction against it. Whatever its potentials for artistic creation and theatrical effect, many resist or reject its inherent artificiality. ... For many performance artists inclined toward notions of "artistic truth," virtual images and systems have thus been viewed with some suspicion, while electronic image media in general have long been eschewed by many because of their relationship to television: the most dulling, manipulative, hegemonic and aesthetically lowbrow of all art forms and art "spaces." …There is therefore a tension, even conflict, between those within performance practice and criticism at either side of the digital divide, which should not be underestimated.[108]

This type of criticism which expresses strong feelings concerning the encroachments of technology upon a theatrical canon - a canon which represents a cultural and institutional tradition of theatre-making - is considered to be 'humanist'. There is a fear that electronic technologies might soon overwhelm the prestige of the conventional theatrical media, such as acting and play, and, therefore, there is an insistence on treating technological theatre as an outsider. There is also fear among some critics that if they became advocates of 'hard' technology in the theatre, this would damage their art-world credibility. This hints that their reluctance to embrace 'hard' technology in the theatre possibly contains an ironic criticism of the futility of technocracy as a successor to capitalism. The roles of technocrats, bureaucrats, managers, employees and technocratic administration that have led to a technocratic society bound to a technocratic capitalism or the formation of a technocratic ideology of modernisation

[108] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 24.

which seems to have reinforced a type of technocratic oppression and led to a crisis of overproduction and overconsumption. This has been the main criticism of capitalism and technocracy. As a result, paradoxically, some critics still remain blind to the effectiveness of artistic expressions aesthetically allied with technology.

Another issue that has helped identify the weaknesses and gaps in existing scholarship, following James Frieze's terminology, is that of 'naming theatre', meaning an examination of the extent to which theatre criticism has contributed to the identity-formation and conceptualisation of theatrical phenomena, such as the use of technology by the directors, in the case of the present thesis.[109]According to Frieze 'names hide some things, objects, rules, and laws, and reveal others'.[110] Following Frieze's argument, I have noticed that there is only a limited number of books in theatre scholarship, which are clearly naming models of directing based on technology, and in which technology is conceived as a significant means to synthesise/rehearse a theatre theory and history. Birringer points out that 'a language of new media has been learned but it is not a common or neutral language'.[111] In this way he accurately underlines the paradox. It is not the identification of the applications of technology that is the problem, but rather the rehearsal of a homogenising theoretical framework derived by them.

[109] James Frieze, *Naming Theatre: Demonstrative Diagnosis in Performance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 1.
[110] Frieze refers to the deployment of character-naming or play-naming. However I take the research further to a type of theatre theory of a directorial genre-naming.
[111] Johannes Birringer, *Performance, Technology and Science*, xxi.

Moreover, there is only limited focus on comparative studies on how directors systematically use technology in order to develop their art.[112]

There are of course numerous studies related to acting styles, choices in repertory, theatrical aesthetics (such as the contribution of modernism or postmodernism), or aspects of identity (such as race, class, gender, political ideology), as major influences on the art of directing, but only a few contributions have been made identifying technology as one of the most crucial factors in the hybrid identity of the role of the theatrical director. Additionally, the scarcity of comparative analysis conducted in a point-by-point manner, especially in terms of director's theatre stage language, is frequently bemoaned by the theatre scholar community. In line with Birringer's point of view mentioned above, the contribution of this study consists in providing proof of the feasibility of such comparative analysis, both theoretically and practically. Of course I acknowledge that the analysis of directing is a very complicated issue within theatre studies, since it might include a wide range of factors that are volatile such as acting styles, aesthetics, cultural elements, personality of the director, intentions, ideology, and identity. In my thesis, I address the gap in this area, and inspired by the practice of three significant contemporary theatre directors, I intend to provide some of the missing elements.[113]

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[112] See the work of Christopher Baugh, *Theatre, Performance and Technology* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

[113] According to Joe Kelleher and Nicolas Ridout the 'contemporary' is thought of 'as the time of the encounter; the time around a particular theatrical experience in which you might be enfolded.' Joe Kelleher and Nicholas Ridout, eds., *Contemporary Theatres in Europe: A Critical Companion* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 3.

Consequently, this thesis aspires to make a contribution to an understanding of the processes of the director's craft. It provides additional evidence through documentation and critical comparative analysis that suggests and dissects models of directing by understanding the working methods of some key contemporary theatre directors. It facilitates the practical understanding of directors in directing actors and staging a text through the means of technology. The current study adds to a growing body of literature on the complicated issue of director's theatre, attributes to the development of research skills that analyse/interpret a set of directorial strategies and adds to the dissemination of these working methods.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS SURROUNDING TECHNOLOGY

According to the 'description theory' formulated by Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell, the sense of a singular term accounts for the cognitive significance of the term, and determines a reference depending on what the world is like. However, according to Frege and Russell the description does not have to apply exactly; it is good enough if the description is close.[114] Additionally, not every single property referred to in the description has to be indicated by the referent; rather, for a term to refer, most of the properties have to apply. This theory consists essentially in the idea that the meanings, semantic contents, of names are identical to the descriptions associated with them by speakers, while their referents are determined by the objects that satisfy these descriptions. My key terms that resonate with the thesis rationale take the meaning of a

[114] David Braddon-Mitchell and Frank Jackson, *Philosophy of Mind and Cognition. An Introduction* (Cambridge (Mass.): Basil Blackwell, 2007), 68-72.

name, for example, ‘theatre director’ or ‘technology’, to be a collection of descriptions and take the referent of the name to be the thing that conforms to all or most of those descriptions. Corlan G. Bush has offered a comprehensive definition of technology:

> Technology is a form of human cultural activity that applies the principles of science and mechanics to the solution of problems. It includes the resources, tools, processes, personnel, and systems developed to perform tasks and create immediate particular, and personal and/or competitive advantages in a given ecological, economic, and social context.[115]

Depending on context, technology is: first, the tools and machines that help to solve problems; second, the techniques or cognition, that includes methods, materials, information, and processes for solving the condition such as building technology or medical technology; and third, a culture-forming activity such as manufacturing technology, infrastructure technology, or even space-travel technology.[116]

WHAT TYPE OF TECHNOLOGY?

In the context of theatre-making the term ‘technical theatre’, according to Christine White, includes all technical elements and the technical roles/members of staff

[115] Corlan Bush, ‘Women and the Assessment of Technology: to Think, to Be; to Unthink, to Free’, in J. Rothschild, ed., *Machina Ex Dea: Feminist Perspectives on Technology* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983), 151.
[116] For the history of technology see Donald Cardwell, *Wheels, Clocks, and Rockets: A History of Technology* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001).

within a theatre company.[117] Access equipment includes access towers, tallescope, ladders, amplifiers, moving gobos heads, automated moving lights, theatre lanterns, projections, microphones, speakers, cycloramas, sound mixers, fly towers, masking features, moving platforms, pyrotechnics, stroboscopes, revolving stage, rigging, elevation of scenic items, smoke machines, dance flooring, ramps, stairs, trucks, as well as personnel, such as stage managers, production managers, electricians, heads of lighting/sound/projection and stage crew, are some of the ample technical theatrical features.[118] These technical elements and roles, which are used broadly and by tradition in the theatre, contextualise the term 'technical theatre' covering a wide area of the resources, tools, processes, personnel, and systems that help to solve directorial problems in the theatrical environment.

With the progress of technology the related vocabulary in the theatre has been fundamentally enriched. Terms such as wireless, electronic, interactive, digital equipment, wearable motion capture suits and gesture graphical, digital real-time or telematic applications, surround sound designs, video/motion tracking systems, computer programming technologies, robotics, digital projection systems, sensing systems, hardware/software components, internet-based communications, photographic, filmic, electro-acoustic techniques, three-dimensional (3D) computer graphics animation, virtual/mixed reality environments (virtual spaces created by video and 3D virtual reality projections), technological costumes, prostheses, rendering/video-game

[117] Christine White, A. *Technical theatre: A Practical Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), passim.
[118] For a glossary of stage terms see Hendrik Baker, *Stage Management and Theatrecraft: A Stage Manager's Handbook* (London: Miller, 1980), 310-340.

engines, interaction design, VJ/DJ sampling, artificial intelligence, 3D film, modelling, animation and many more technology-based terms and items are broadly used in contemporary theatre-making.

New subjects and vocabulary have raised innovative discussions and concerns for theatre practitioners and scholarship. Virtual reality,[119] the digitised body, liveness,[120] posthumanism,[121] robots, cyborgs, video games, simulacrum, immersion,[122] interaction, internet live performance, theatre in cyberspace, trans-disciplinary understanding of space, interactive performance, reflection/replication through the technological duplicate, hyper-reality, performance ecology, interdisciplinary collaborative creative process, virtual/physical levels of presentation, digital dramaturgy, virtual actors, experimental research, and reevaluation of audience's reception, are some of the most important topics for a plethora of conferences, seminars and courses organised by academia, as well as for professional training programmes and an expanding bibliography that critically examines the role of theatre and performance, the work of art, 'in the age of digital reproduction'.[123] In the chapters that follow I will attempt to theorise the relationship between directors and these technological materials and

[119] Jon McKenzie, 'Virtual Reality: Performance, Immersion, and the Thaw,' *Drama Review*, 38.4 (Winter, 1994): 83-106.
[120] Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (London: Routledge, 2008), passim.
[121] Posthumanism argues that western industrialised societies are experiencing a new phase of humanity 'wherein no essential differences between bodily existence and computer simulation, cybernetic mechanism and biological organism, robot teleology and human goals, exist .... Embodiment is seen as an accident of history and consciousness is an evolutionary newcomer'. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman*, 4.
[122] Sarah Bay-Cheng, et. al., eds., *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 47.
[123] Reflecting again on the essay by Douglas Davis, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Digital Reproduction (An Evolving Thesis: 1991-1995),' *Leonardo* 28. 5 (1995): 381-186.

technical roles in the theatrical environment in order to establish the historical and theoretical foundations of the change and development of the role of the director.

KEY ISSUES SURROUNDING DIRECTING

THE ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR

The issue of the role of the director has been a controversial and much disputed subject within the field of theatre practitioners and theorists during the past decades. Examples of this controversy can be identified even in the terminology for the word 'theatre director', which has less to do with the linguistic differences between the different languages than with the analysis of the concept behind the activity, and therefore director's role.[124] The term '*mise en scène*' is used interchangeably for both staging a performance and producing an event.[125] The term 'director' is derived from the Latin word 'dirigere' which means 'to direct'. The term has been generally in use in English since the 15th century for 'one who directs, rules and guides', but an artistic use of this term associated with theatre had not been employed until the 19th century, probably via the French 'directeur', a musical term equivalent to the conductor. The explosion of the theatrical usage of the term, within its contemporary context, comes in

[124] The term in different languages: Producer director (English), Matteur en scène (French), Spielleiter (German), Regista (Italian), Director (Spanish), Regisseur (Dutch), Σκηνοθέτης (Skinothetis, from 'scene' and 'put') (Greek). In Kenneth Rae and Richard Southern, eds., *An International Vocabulary o Technica Theatre Terms in Eight Languages* (Bruxelles: Meddens, 1977).
[125] Toby Cole and Helen Krich Chinoy, eds. *Directors on Directing: A Source Book of the Modern Theatre* (London: Owen, 1964), ix.

the 20th century from the United States.[126] For example, according to Toby Cole, the person that in the United States is called the 'director' is called the 'producer' in Britain (until 1956), and the 'régisseur' in Germany and Russia.[127] In France, 'régisseur' refers to the stage manager, while the director is known as 'metteur en scène'.

The employment of the word 'director' today in order to confer an artistic status will be defined later. However, theatre research, particularly the complicated theatre history of the role of the director, has proved that the director used to embrace all the above roles before the era of hyper-specialisation in the theatre. The above development of the terminology offers an insight into how the director is an important component in the theatrical system, and plays a key role in the production of a play. It also poses a number of questions that I will examine such as how the essential changes of the theatrical phenomenon during its history are, inescapably, having a serious effect on the development of the role of the director.

The director, historically, seems to be the embodiment of the intersection of the scholar and professional (someone who has hands on skills and is paid for this) tradition in the theatre. According to theatre history, the director in ancient Greece used to be a combination of a teacher, a leading actor and a playwright/poet called 'didaskalos'. Aeschylus, for example, was very well known for this status. It was the reign of the type of director-playwright/poet. In the Hellenistic times the role of the director was

[126] 'In 1769 Mozart was appointed 'director' of the archbishop of Salzburg's concerts.' Mentioned in the Penny Encyclopaedia, 1839. In Martin Harrison, ed. *The Language of Theatre* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1998), 80.
[127] David Pickering, *Dictionary of the Theatre* (London: Sphere, 1988), 143.

transferred to the star performer of the production. The same was also the case in ancient Rome where the leading actor was called 'dominus gregis'.[128] In the Middle Ages the 'maitre de jeu' had taken the leading role as a book-keeper, poet, and actor. In the sixteenth century 'conducteurs des secrets' performed the Passion Play manipulating 'the secrets', the stage effects provided by the scenic machinery.[129] As a result, the type of the director-impresario and the type of the director-actor was predominant. However, toward the end of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century, the director fulfilling his/her modern role finally appears.

Since the nineteenth century a new historical period for the role of the director in the theatre begins. The figure of the director can be discerned adopting a different type of role: the type of the director-creator. The appearance of the director within a greater artistic and spiritual context was the vaulting vehicle to pass over and displace the role of the teacher, playwright, impresario, actor, decorator, choreographer etcetera. The director now seldom appears in the play which he is directing. The first director in the modern sense was George II, the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen (1826-1914)[130] and the first who advanced to the position of the director from that of stage manager were Madame

[128] In Asia masters often took control of the preparation of the production. 'Suntradhara' (in classical Indian theatre) is selecting, organising, training the cast, overseeing the building, conducting offerings to the gods, and appearing on stage in the preliminaries of the play. In Martin Banham, *The Cambridge Guide to Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 297.
[129] Martin Banham, *The Cambridge Guide to Theatre*, 297.
[130] John W. Frick and Stephen M. Vallillo, eds, *Theatrical Directors: A Biographical Dictionary* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), 324. For history of the work of The Meiningen troupe (1866-1890) see John Osborne, *The Meiningen Court Theatre 1866-1890* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

Vestris (1797-1856)[131] and David Belasco (1853- 1931).[132] The director was conceived as the 'artist of the stage', the 'staging writer', the new protagonist of the stage, the new 'star' of the European theatre and achieved a predominant and highly esteemed position.

The gradual shift towards what is termed today 'director's theatre' has been achieved via experiments with counter-realistic theatrical conventions and modernist movements such as symbolism, expressionism, surrealism etcetera. The idea of the 'total work of art' by Wagner and the philosophical reflection of Nietzsche's ideas presenting a new ontology based on axioms of an aesthetic order and humanist values has fed a new breed of directors-creators such as Appia, Craig, Reinhardt, Meyerhold, Copeau, Granville-Barker etcetera. 'Director's theatre' stresses the predominance of the director and his reading of the text rather than the actor and his performance.[133] The role of the director was represented as 'the modern substitute for the whole complex of social and theatrical factors that had once made theater the great collective art'.[134] In a world that no longer had a total unity 'the director created for audiences a limited approximation of the ancient ideal'.[135]

HOW THE ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR (PAST AND PRESENT) HAS CHANGED (EVOLUTION-DEVELOPMENT) TOWARDS A DIRECTOR'S THEATRE (DIRECTOR-CREATOR)

[131] William Worthen Appleton, *Madame Vestris and the London Stage* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974).
[132] John W. Frick and Stephen M. Vallillo, eds, *Theatrical Directors: A Biographical Dictionary*, 131-132.
[133] See 'actor's theatre'. In Martin Harrison, ed. *The Language of Theatre*, 80.
[134] Helen Krich Chinoy, 'The emergence of the director', in Cole and Chinoy, eds., *Directors on Directing*, 53.
[135] Ibid, 26.

In addressing how the role of the director has changed the natural place to start is with a detailed description-definition of the activity of the director. Directing is a system of action. It has its own functions and characteristics. The fundamental laws that govern the art of directing would include properties[136] such as creativity (being a true artist), leading (having a vision), managing (running the staging) and teaching (teacher of actors). [137] These results obtained from the collections of descriptions associated with this term.[138]

All of them are fundamental ingredients that complement each other and, therefore, each one can be used in balance with the others. However they do not replace each other and do not substitute for one another, since each one of them is a distinct entity. They work together as a synthesis. The challenge for a director is to combine strong creativity, leadership, teaching and stage managing. Thus there is an understanding of the director's activity in both physical and behavioural terms. These properties of directing are the declarations of core entities broadly recognised as the director's exclusive rights. A director's properties are established in relation to other individuals or groups (actors, playwrights, scenographers, designers, technologists etcetera) in the theatre ecology which is proposed in Kershaw's theory.[139] The main

[136] Facts, properties, qualia and premises of the directing experience. What is like to have them or what is like to have this experience?
[137] This part is based on the lectures at the Yale School of Drama by the lecturer Eliza Cardone, during the winter semester 2007/2008.
[138] See Chapter One.
[139] The term is borrowed from Baz Kershaw's 'theatre ecology'. Baz Kershaw, *Theatre Ecology* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

work of the director is to look for talented people. Consequently, directors' authorship constitutes an exposure of other professionals to a theatrical experience that has been especially designed to develop their creative potential. Director's authorship according to Simon Shepherd is when the director is 'in charge of a truth machine'. [140] This means that director's identity or director's authorship comes to be seen 'as a product of the work of authoring' and as the 'originating point' and the 'fountainhead of vision'.[141] This type of rationality and course of action is inextricably linked with cultural tools and materials, such as the use of technology as I argue in this study, in order to promote directing strategies, which I will attempt to interpret, such as the models of directing with technology.

ELIZABETH LECOMPTE, ROBERT LEPAGE AND KATIE MITCHELL: DIRECTOR'S THEATRE WITH THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND THEIR GREAT IMPORTANCE FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ART OF DIRECTING.

I have chosen to focus on the working practices and theatrical aesthetics of LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell as I share their interests in innovative theatre. LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell practice a syncretic theatre employing diverse tools, materials and stage languages to produce a synthesis of different or opposing principles and practices in the theatrical environment. Multi-disciplinarity, multi-mediality and multi-culturalism are the favorite subjects of their directing. LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell are fascinated by the plurality of cultural systems, their attached values to

[140] Simon Shepherd, *Direction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 169.
[141] Ibid, 170.

traditional historic and symbolic qualities within the national entity, and the combination of multiple traditions overlapping and merging with each other. The polyphony caused by the combination of two or more vectors, which, when coexisting and communicating, form an aesthetic experience or produce theatrical aesthetics inevitably attracts these three theatre directors. Multiple narratives are formed through multi-medial effects. Multiple features interact with each other overlapping and juxtaposing in order to provoke new perspectives. Montage of multiple realities reveals multilayered significations, to allow various interpretations and express the polyvalent levels of the mind. This thesis focuses on LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell's work as they are positioned historically and aesthetically as the next group of innovators in the field.

Another area of interest to me is the notion of 'multi-', within LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell's directing. Two modes can be distinguished: the 'synergy' between different styles, methods, forms and media or the 'contra/anti-synergy' between them. These produce plausible functional forms in their directing and serve to shape three appropriate directing models with various interpretations. Multiple diverse scores related to time, space, body, action, movement, light, sound, film, video, cultures, languages, reality, fantasy, mediatised and live elements coexist harmoniously forming an aesthetic whole or a contrast forming a conflict between them. The actualisation of the compatibility or conflict of multiple features in their directing is interpreted as a dialogue or synthesis. A contrapuntal style of directing, marked by the contrapuntal interplay of elements, determines the pace and the complexity of their work.

Compelling contradictory or reconciled elements in the three models of directing are formulated through the involvement of systems of differences or relationships. The montage of various supporting or opposite features creates an aesthetic experience. In this way LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell are grounding experiments in stylisation. These three directors who practice and love the notion of 'multi-'constitute the main subject in the writing of this thesis. Today, with further productions, the debate continues as to why and how theatre directors are impelled to produce multimedia theatre.

I have also been captivated by directing which has the capacity to locate and link different media, so that they can communicate with each other. Patterns promoting information, interaction, interconnectivity, and immersion are fundamental. The element of changeability is another basic characteristic of their directing. This means that compelling ideas related to form or meaning integrate with the play, acting, design or technical aspects in a malleable osmosis. Consequently, the interaction of all these flexible theatrical elements creates an extraordinary dynamic. The directorial vision is constructed by the appropriation and transgression of the genres and styles, the hybridisation of the materials and the representation of mutant human bodies on stage. The three directors use deliberately fictional, radical, unusual, figurative, unrealistic stage language to express an inclination towards playfulness and freedom. LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell are particularly interested in communicating their theatricality to the audience. Therefore through a number of mutating, open forms and flexible media, they engage in the perpetual transformation of the *mise en scène*.

In this thesis, an attempt is made to record the nature of the substantial work of these directors since they have had a significant impact on the history of contemporary theatre directing. Scholarship has had difficulty in formulating a new vocabulary to define the techniques of their directorial practice. Technology-based scores are incorporated as a directorial strategy as a vehicle for further meaning, exploring more the 'characteristics of new media'.[142] Patterns include computer-mediated communication, digitisation, interactivity (opportunities to manipulate and intervene, being a user - playing, experimenting, exploring - and not just a viewer/ reader), hypertext formats (which is a medium that is 'hyper', meaning 'above, beyond or outside' all other media and connects them), as well as decentralised and dispersal characteristics of the media systems.[143] There are also forms of virtual reality including simulated reality, immersive (the user has some degree of interaction) representational environments, transformations and dislocations of established media. I focus in this thesis on the work of LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell, who practice the notion of 'in'/'inter-'.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

In Chapter One, *A Theoretical Framework for the Models of Directing with Technology and Historical Echoes*, I formulate a homogenous and systematic

[142] Martin Lister, et. al, *New Media: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2009), 13-37.
[143] Ibid, 23.

theoretical framework to include the selected directorial technological models. I discuss major premises, benefits and issues. I also contextualise the theoretical aspects of the use of technology on stage related to a specific problematic or rationale, which gives an opportunity to present a hypothesis: that an evolution of the art of directing is taking place via the extensive use and familiarity with the practices of technology. I document this relationship, which demonstrates the trajectory from mediality to multi-mediality and inter-mediality. I examine the dialectical intensification from the notion of mediality to the notion of multi-mediality, as well as, the radical evolution to the notion of inter-mediality, as all have been compliant in the work of the theatre directors. These theories support the observed change and development in the role of the theatre director through technology. I also discuss here the role of technology and its implications for the aesthetics in the modernist, post modernist and post-post modernist era. Then I look at the origins of particular works of some directors and the influences upon these works that belong to different aesthetic schools and styles, whose aspects are central to this particular inquiry. The limited number of these directors enables an examination of some key strands in that history. This historically-based evidence has helped me to trace how this particular directorial use of technology figures the aesthetic principles of the directors over time.

In Chapter Two, *Elizabeth LeCompte and Fragmentary Technology*, I investigate the work of a theatrical director, who I consider to be among the most important directors in the theatre today. I introduce the director with a short reference to her history, ideology, aesthetics, demonstration of the basic theoretical points behind her

work with technology and the application of this specialised directing theory in the production of *Hamlet*. In Chapter Three, *Robert Lepage and Totalising Technology*, I examine how central to Robert Lepage's creativity is the notion of 'totalising technology'. The analysis of his technological directing model follows a similar pattern of introduction to the director, demonstration of the basic theoretical points behind his work with technology and application of this specialised directing theory in his production *Lipsynch*. In Chapter Four, *Katie Mitchell and Technological Hybridisation*, I introduce how Katie Mitchell demonstrates a 'technological hybridisation' of both tendencies. In this chapter I will also introduce the director, demonstrate the basic theoretical points and apply this specialised directing theory to her production *Attempts on her Life*.

CHAPTER ONE: A THEORY OF DIRECTING MODELS WITH TECHNOLOGY AND HISTORICAL ECHOES

Directors who have been constantly experimenting with technology, showing an extraordinary capacity to manipulate and exploit technology's structures in the theatre - whom I study in this thesis - have noticeably changed and shifted developing their directorial identity. The fact that the medialities of the technological medium are latent interfaces seems to be very complicated to analyse. Without special expertise there is a tendency by the extant scholarship to discuss models of directing with technology without clarification of their basic materialistic-based properties of the technological medium, its medialities and in alienation with the process of theatricality. In this chapter, I seek to address this gap by bracketing much of the properties of the directorial production stemmed from the use of the medialities of technology and focusing on the issue of technology's mediated theatricality, which, I argue, is situated in the materialistic aspects of the technological medium and its medialities.

In terms of methodology, I will first constitute the minor elements of my theoretical framework providing a detailed 'microscopic' analysis of the models of directing with technology and then I will proceed to a 'macrocosmic' aspect giving an interpretation of the phenomenon of a change, shift and development of the role of the director that will inform my interpretation of the following case studies. This approach has pragmatic advantages: it produces a solid framework of a theoretical aspect in order to proceed afterward to the applications analysing and comparing the

work of three major staging philosophies. In this way, I seek to enrich the discourse on the significant issue of directing with technology and provide paradigmatic models for a theoretical-practical discussion. Of course the structuring of a specialised theatre theory that satisfies all the directing conditions is unlikely, if not impossible. Subsequently, at this stage of considering and constructing models of a theory of directing, I will locate my interpretation upon a number of assumptions.

Since, as I will reveal in this chapter, there have been historical cases of directors where the directorial identity has been shaped and changed through applying technology, I will demonstrate how my hypothesis can be productively grounded from a historical-theoretical point of view. The art of directing has been dependent historically on a set of technological or mechanical facts or properties. The fact that this change can be proved to be firm and with continuity seems to be a proper inferring practice for my hypothesis that the change, shift and development of the role of the director can be identified and traced successfully through a homogenous/uniformly defined and systematically found factor/element, such as the use of technology.

DIRECTING MODELS WITH TECHNOLOGY: THE 'MICROSCOPIC' ASPECT

The starting point of this section is the theoretical articulation of how directing models - defined by the display of the characteristics of a director's theatre through applying technology - can manifest a piece of directorial work with a specific shape/form/mediality. I suggest that the shape/form/mediality is based on a process -

theatre-making - and is influenced by the degree (quantitative) and the way (qualitative) of convergence/hybridisation between the theatrical and technological elements. It has the features of amplifying affixed technological components and handling the technological material in such a way that forms a directorial entity, which aims to affect the audience or, in other words, to win audience' attention, by contributing to the production of hybrid dramatic effects.[144]

The formula for directing models with technology, reflecting on Meyerhold's formula on acting,[145] may be expressed as follows: Technology-based directing models or Models of directing with technology = *Mediators/Medialities* (meaning the elements of Acting/Performers + Play/Text + Stage +Technology in my case) of the *Stylistic Modes* of the production (*Aesthetic Style* + *Stage Logic*) + *Audience* (focusing on the production of Theatricality). I will explain this formula shortly. The *Mediators* of the stylistic modes of the production are the theatrical elements, such as acting by the performers, the play-text provided by the playwright (or devisors), the use of space formed by the set, sound, light and video designer, and the software/hardware technology produced by technologist. The *Stylistic Modes* of the production constitute the *Aesthetic Style* meaning the manner that directors represent narrative (abstract montage, mixing of narratives), the selection of collaborators and the *Stage Logic* of the directing produced by the director, for example the total theatre (Wagner) or alienation (Brecht) aesthetics which involve the hard realities of how their directing will be made

[144] For hybridity see Sarah Bay-Cheng, et. al., eds., *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 186-187.
[145] Meyerhold's formula on acting quoted in Erika Fischer-Lichte, *History of European Drama and Theatre* (London: Routledge, 2002), 292.

(stage machinery, computerised tools and applications, technical design, technical construction and production etcetera). The *Mediators* produce *medialities*.[146] The medialities of the mediators, such as the medialities of the actor, the play or the set design have been very well established in theatre studies scholarship. However, the medialities of the multimedia technologies are still under formation and specifically the medialities of the new media technologies are in a primary-experimental phase and under multiple interpretations. This phenomenon is inextricably connected to the art of directing and its evolution is impossible to disentangle from the development of the directorial role.[147]

The main purpose of the director in the theatre is not only to solve conventional problems related to the issue of representation on stage, but also to go beyond just solving problems to actually thinking about creativity and theatrical aesthetics. The director knows what, how, and in what way to transmit their expertise. The primary purpose of technology itself (machine-virtual-non human) had been to solve problems and it is prepared and programmed for all the technical eventualities in the theatrical environment. But, technology cannot programme all the potential representational sequences in advance. This is where the director comes in with his/her basic role as creator of the performance.

[146] I will focus specifically on technology's medialities in the case studies that I will analyze in the following chapters of this thesis.
[147] For 'Materiality', 'Transparency', and 'Virtuality' see Sarah Bay-Cheng, et. al., eds., *Mapping Intermediality*, 141-142.

Since technology (a material's mediality) moves beyond its purpose of just solving practical problems (providing tangible and practical solutions) to actually being robustly a primary element and a cognitive paradigm of a thought provoking creativity/theatrical aesthetics (and therefore is being shifted to a level of mediating theatrical aesthetics) a first stage of a shift seems to have taken place. This essentially means that the use of technology by the directors - as a mediator of the stylistic mode of the production - has a clear trajectory from being an afterthought directorial element - a directorial element that comes as a late/post/afterwards addition to the *Aesthetic style + Logic* of the directing - to being a forethought directorial element - a directorial element that comes as an early/pre/beforehand condition. This trajectory, I argue, demonstrates a historical justifiable change, shift, and development of the role of the director. A fundamental premise towards the formation of a theatre theory is, therefore, that technology 'is' directing or that technology 'mediates' the art of directing. This means that whenever there is a condition of technology in the theatrical environment, I have taken it as a condition of directing or a condition that exposes the medialities of directing. It is implied that when one thinks of directing, we also think of the element of technology as particularly appropriate to expose a directorial action. Consequently, the phenomenon has important implications for the role of the director as a whole, since it demonstrates a paradigmatic shift of a significant and more complex cause-effect relationship in the theatrical environment.[148]

[148] For a 'theatre ecology' and 'symbiosis environment' see Baz Kershaw, *Theatre Ecology: Environments and Performance Events* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 5-37.

The system or network of 'directing plus technology' is appropriate to represent the qualities of a changing, developmental, and shifted theatrical environment, which allows the director to perform not just a directing, a smooth progressing of direction with the help of technology, but, more importantly, to perform a directing that invokes a new perspective of their directorial identity. Or in Kershaw's terms the 'performance commons' that emerge produce 'perspectives' for viewing and interpreting 'theatrical phenomena', such as the developmental role of the theatre director.[149] If this argument is to be extended the specified properties of directing models with technology (such as the paradigm of the models of fragmentary technology, totalising technology, and technological hybridisation) are able to define the change, shift, development in the role of the director. Reflecting on Baz Kershaw's theory, if directing is associated with technology in such a way and degree - meaning an essential connection of great importance - then this indicates that the two concepts attest to a synonymy-class or 'ecology' - in the theatrical system. In this way directors who have shown a constant interest in this particular mediality adapt to theatrical environments, change their behaviour and permit 'homologies' to occur.[150]

But to what extent directors need to update their technological skills in order to make directorial modifications? The director can modify things related to representation but in order to do so they need to know what the potentials of the technological elements are. Here the role of the technology-based collaborator is crucial. Surely the director can examine an entire database of propositions provided by specialists on

[149] Baz Kershaw, *Theatre Ecology*, 15-23.
[150] Ibid, 23.

technology (multidisciplinary collaborators) and work out which aspects require modification according to the needs of the performance. But if the director is burdened with an enormous database of facts to examine every time that they make a performance (technological-technical issues) the task starts to look problematic. Here the role of the technologicallly based collaborator is to lift this burden from the shoulders of the director. Consequently, the role of the technological specialists for the development of the performance becomes greater than ever. The obvious appeal of the director to large technical crews is related to the notion of relevance: only certain properties of the state of technology (low tech or high tech) are relevant in the context of each performance. As a result, the role of the director - related to the medialities of technology - is to determine what is and what is not relevant to their vision for the performance and to what extent. Or else the relation of the director to the technological properties is pervasively shaped by the latter's inclination to perform a particular piece of directing in a particular way. Subsequently, in models of directing with technology, the range of collaborators around the director who are experts on more complicated technological issues, not only intervene fundamentally to the cognitive structure of the production, but also alter significantly the interrelationships between all the aforementioned historic/aesthetic normative theatrical factors. As a result a shift in the role of the director seems to take place since the director more directs and less controls.

Another aspect towards the formulation of a theatre theory can be the demonstration of the necessity of locating the technological meta-language on the art of directing. This means that the language of technology is a type of theatrically articulated

language applied on another type of theatrical language, such as the language of directing, as in the metaphor with the network above. In order to demonstrate, I will include some pivotal terms employing the language of postmodernism, which will help me to make the shift to this idea. The notion of 'meta-communication' has been defined by Gregory Bateson as 'communicating about communication'.[151] Subsequently, 'meta-communication' is the level of communication where the subject of discourse is 'the relationship between the speakers'. Therefore, communication is about the kind of situation in which 'an interaction takes place', it is about 'what kind of context one is in' and consequently is about 'the interaction itself', according to Bateson. This reflection upon communication or 'a framing of communication' that accompanies communication demonstrates that language and dialogue - as well as translation - go beyond meaning, involving an autonomous production of 'musicality'. In the theatre, words, tones of voice, facial gestures, body language and posture, as 'frames of communication', contribute to the production of a 'musicality', which constitutes an implicit flow of interaction 'beyond' denotation.

Within the postmodernist theatrical context the notion of 'meta-communication' can be traced in the notions of 'meta-drama' and 'meta-theatre'. Meta-drama is when within a play one can find comments upon the conventions of its genre. Meta-theatre is when the performance calls attention to the presentational aspects of the theatre and its

[151] Gregory Bateson, 'A Theory of Play and Fantasy', in *Steps to An Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution and Epistemology* (Northvale, N.J. and London: Aronson, 1987), 180.

conventions.[152] Meta-theatricality is a term that refers exclusively to the postmodern theatre with the aesthetics of self-irony 'that depends upon the simultaneity of what has come before and what is transpiring in the very moment of presentation'.[153] Additionally Lehmann attests to a 'postdramatic theatre' according to which 'the spread and then omnipresence of the media in everyday life since the 1970s has brought with it a new multiform kind of theatrical discourse,' [154] which includes traits such as the theatre of deconstruction, multi-media theatre, restoratively traditionalist theatre and the theatre of gestures and movement.[155]

Borrowing the above terms of reference, I suggest that with the notion of locating the technological meta-language on the art of directing, the role of technology could be analysed in such a way as to reveal the meanings or the insights that the directing is intending to convey, calling particular attention to the presentational aspects of directing and its conventions, bringing 'a new multiform of theatrical discourse'. Consequently a director's interaction with technology seems to be a form of discourse, meaning that the use of technology not only tells the audience something about the aesthetics and ideology of the director, but more significantly reveals a great deal about the dramatic effect of the art of directing *per se,* as well as, its effectiveness for the audience. Therefore, an approach, in terms of interpreting the medialities of technology by paradigmatic theatre directors, includes an awareness of the way that any type of technology (medialities of technology) relate to other major elements of director's

[152] Tracy Davis and Thomas Postlewait, eds., *Theatricality*, 14-16.
[153] Davis and Postlewait, eds., *Theatricality*, 16.
[154] Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 1999), 22.
[155] Ibid, 25.

theatre, such as dramaturgy, acting, style-aesthetics, and an awareness of the way that technology relates to the notion of theatricality. Technology is not only viewed as a means to control and manipulate the stage language by the director, but also, one can claim that it contains a directorial truth in it. In this respect the intervention of the principle of technology provides a wholly appropriate introduction to an analysis of the directorial practices since a shift seems to have taken place.

The final aspect in the formation of a theory for directing models with technology is to turn to pre-existing theatrical theories of directing models, such as, the Wagnerian theory of total theatre (the Stanislavskian system is an example in a critical-reflective way of this influential school of thought) and the Brechtian theory of estrangement, and consider what would happen in conditions displaying these characteristics through applying technology or compare the outcome with what happens under the condition of not applying technology.[156] In order to examine the link forged between the use of technology and theatrical aesthetics within particular productions and directors it is appropriate to identify how the two aesthetic theories function for contemporary directors. Matthew Wilson Smith provides a ground-breaking approach supporting the idea that Wagner's model has been developed today into a form that either 'exposes and celebrates the outward signs of mechanical production on which it relies' or 'attempts to utterly conceal them by attempting to integrate those signs of production into a pseudo-organic totality'.[157] On the other hand Brecht's 'Verfremdungseffekt', 'alienation' or

[156] The reasons of this methodology have been already explained in the Introduction.
[157] Matthew Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art: From Bayreuth to Cyberspace* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 3.

'distancing' model, according to which the audience should be engaged in the production critically by rationalising emotional responses and the actor's attitude towards the role must be objective and detached by techniques of demonstration rather than impersonation. According to Josette Féral and Ron Bermingham:

> The processes of alienation at work in the theatre of Brecht described above have been: fragmentation of the narrative; rupture in the order or representation; displacement of the subject of enunciation; decentering of the spectator's point of view with respect to the event; passage from reality to fiction and from the fiction to reality; placement of the part within the context of the whole, and a mixture of other visual forms (film, slides, cabaret, etc).[158]

Brecht's model evolves into the type of 'deconstructive performance', which challenges the received representational forms through meta-theatrical strategies.[159] But how are the aforementioned theatrical qualities related to the medialities of technology?

TECHNOLOGY'S MEDIATED COMMUNICATION IN THE WORK OF THEATRE DIRECTORS

Erika Fischer-Lichte describes the theory of mediality as 'the process of transferring "content" from one medium to another, by changing it into a totally new product.' This new product 'can be understood in terms of the new conditions, which

[158] Josette Féral, 'Alienation Theory in Multi-Media Performance', trans. Ron Bermingham, *Theatre Journal* 39.4 (Dec., 1987): 469.
[159] See Paul Allain and Jen Harvie, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 182. For the metatheatre's strategies see also Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 210-211. For the role of the 'external intention' see Constantin Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares*, trans. Elizabeth Reynolds (London: Eyre Methuen, 1980), 89.

are determined by the particular medium.'[160] This means that in theatre theory, mediality is a phenomenon, which takes place when the medium itself, such as acting (spoken text, gesture and movement), make-up, costumes, setting, props, lighting and music leads to the creation of a theatrical event. Theatrical event, according to Aston and Savona, is a work 'which is to be realized in two planes (time and space) not one', since it 'exists not only to be read but also to be seen'. Consequently, the 'theatrical event' is articulated through the exposure of the 'dramatic effect', which is a process completed in the mind of the spectator and causes a 'feeling, impression or experience that influences audience's perception'.[161]

Initially the theory of mediality or of 'the medial transformation' in the theatre was rooted in the relationship between the written text-play (drama) and the theatrical performance (theatre). Theatrical performance according to theatrical semiologist Fischer-Lichte is a 'multi-medial text', in contrast with the drama which is a 'mono-medial text'. Theatrical performance as a multi-medial text 'is communicated at the very least by two media: the stage and the actor' [162] and, therefore, reflecting on Aston and Savona, 'is to be seen'. For example, the on-stage set design mediates the fictional space of the dramatic text and the actual physicality of the actor on stage mediates the role. This process of 'making a means visible', according to Fischer-Lichte, is an

[160] Erika Fischer-Lichte, et. al., eds., *Metzler Lexikon Theatertheorie* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2005), 196-199. Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Show and the Gaze of Theatre: A European Perspective* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997), 21.
[161] Elaine Aston and George Savona, *Theatre as Sign System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance* (London: Routledge, 1991), 2.
[162] Fischer-Lichte, *The Show and the Gaze of Theatre*, 319.

exhibition of mediality. Therefore, the concept of mediality is an integral part of a definition of theatricality:

> Once we understand theatricality as the, in each instance, specific staging of bodies in different media for the, in each instance, specific perception through others, theatricality and mediality seem intimately connected.[163]

It is important then to set out the primary definition of theatricality. Thomas Postlewait and Tracy C. Davis establish the following definition:

> So, it [theatricality] is a mode of representation or a style of behaviour characterized by histrionic actions, manners, and devices, and hence a practice; yet it is also an interpretative model for describing psychological identity, social ceremonies, communal festivities, and public spectacles, and hence a theoretical concept. It has even attained the status of both an aesthetic and a philosophical system. Thus, to some people, it is that which is quintessentially the theatre, while to others it is the theatre subsumed into the whole world. Apparently the concept is comprehensive of all meanings yet empty of all specific sense.[164]

For Davis and Postlewait, theatricality is thus located both on the stage and in the perceiver representing the communicative nature of both the performer's actions and the spectator's reactions.[165] It is worth recalling here Willmar Sauter's view who points out that 'theatricality is meant to represent the essential or possible characteristics of theatre

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[163] 'Versteht man unter Theatralität die je spezifische Inszenierung von Körpern in unterschiedlichen Medien zur je besonderen Wahrnehmung durch andere, dann erscheint Theatralität eng auf Medialität bezogen.' Erika Fischer-Lichte, et. al., eds., *Wahrnehmung und Medialität* (Tübingen/Basel: Francke 2001), 13. Reproduced in Boenisch, Peter M., *Book Review: Erika Fischer-Lichte et.al., eds.: Wahrnehmung und Medialität [Perception and mediality]*. Tübingen/Basel: Francke 2001, accessed Nov. 20, 2007. <http://people.brunel.ac.uk/ bst/vol0202/petermboenisch.html>.

[164] Davis and Postlewait, eds., *Theatricality*, 1.

[165] Ibid, *Theatricality*, 23.

as an art form and as a cultural phenomenon.'[166] Consequently, theatricality is a way of describing what performers and what spectators do together 'in the making of the theatrical event'.[167]

The director's stylistic choices sharpen audience's sensory perception by highlighting details and the specificity of theatrical signs (acting, set, multimedia design, and other technical elements) in the construction of stage pictures and action. The creation of powerful stage images as an integral part of this specific dramatic effect, which is the main work of the director, conveys a certain 'presence', which Fischer-Lichte describes as 'a specific experience of intensity'.[168] Therefore, theatrical media, such as the live immediacy of the actor, the unfolding of the dramatic action, the sensory experience of the visual/audio elements and the energy generated by the stage-audience relationship comprise this theatrical 'experience of intensity' or convey the effect of 'presence'. All these strategies of mediality or qualities of mediality lead to a dramatic effect, which influences audience perception of the performance's production of meaning and are fully explored by the work of the director through several theatrical styles, for example in the romantic, symbolic, naturalistic, psychologically realistic, avant-garde theatre, or genres, such as the musical, epic, puppet, vaudeville, mime theatre etcetera. As a result, historically, the strategies of mediality, within the framework of theatricality, have evolved together with the director's theatre.

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[166] Willmar Sauter, *The Theatrical Event: Dynamics of Performance and Perception* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2000), 50.
[167] Ibid, 50.
[168] In short, directors have the capacity to channel memory and imagination by transforming images and dramatic situations into 'a specific experience of intensity' decipherable by the audience. For Intensität see Erika Fischer-Lichte, et. al., eds., *Wahrnehmung und Medialität*, 13.

I will now demonstrate the interventions within the specific field of directing with technology. The intriguing fact that technology is usually taken to mean the elements of technology-based materials, tools, systems, methods, actions, devices and signs that are used to create different layers of produced meaning and to exercise a dramatic effect, by providing unexpected experiences and associations in the spectators' minds, suggest significantly that the technological medium comprises of a theatrical 'experience of intensity', conveys the effect of 'presence' or has 'theatricality'. It is not surprising then that two important implications arise. Firstly, that the critical contribution of technology transcribes also in the mediality of theatre and, therefore, should not be overlooked. Secondly, when the manifestation of mediality through technology identifies a specific directorial identity, the appearance of the director-creator or director's theatre, whose work is inextricably linked to technology, then, the developmental role of the director depends on the developmental applications of technology.

The use of elevators, revolving turntables, moving platforms, tracks/motors, electric lights, smoke machines, microphones and amplifiers are only some examples of the technological equipment that convey a certain presence or create an atmosphere, namely mediating theatricality by creating a corresponding immediacy for the play's themes. According to Aronson:

> Modern design functions by visually and metaphorically placing the specific world of the play within some sort of broader context of the world of the

> audience; it is a kind of metanarrative that attempts to encompass the world within a unified image.[169]

A variety of styles in set, lighting and sound design, such as the use of a kinetic scenery that is 'dancing', the use of 'hard' and 'soft' lighting, strobe or focusable spotlights, the use of wireless microphones for vocal reinforcement or the use of advanced sound systems that give the impression that the quality of the sound is like the one produced in a studio recording, result in mediating theatricality, by 'encompassing the world'. In this context technology mediates an illusionistic world (from romanticism and realism to modernist abstraction) as an extension of the playwright's themes and structures or else is a 'metanarrative' and, therefore, is intergraded into drama's purposes to reflect the world. By enhancing the plasticity and transformability of the stage through technology directors suggest an atmosphere and reinforce technological medium's theatricality.

But how has the correlation between technology and art been operated within a particular historical and ideological framework? The conception of art as a mediation of the modern technological world, together with the element of the internal spirituality of the artist - a notion which epitomised the essence of Western metaphysics - [170] appeared in various movements throughout modernism. The spirit of the period, the modernist 'zeitgeist', was one of experimentation and invention where the tendencies for

[169] Arnold Aronson, *Looking into the Abyss: Essays on Scenography* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 14.
[170] For an address to the issue of spirituality, metaphysics and theatre see Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, Reymond Geuss, and Ronald Speirs, eds., trans. Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). For the nature of the spirituality, metaphysics, ritual and religion in the 'theatre of cruelty' in Artaud's theatre theory see Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, trans. Victor Corti (London: Calder, 1981). See also Appendix B.

technological and scientific innovations were inextricably linked with the influences on the artistic movements. The rationalised view of the modern world fascinated by technology's inventions led philosophical thought into making critical contributions related to the notion and the role of technology in a modern society. Two opposed movements were then established: the one according to which technology provided confidence in man's progress and social development (utopian view of technology) and its opposite, which saw in technology an oppressive potential and massive destruction (dystopian view of technology).[171] Consequently, modernism started to be defined by its close relationship with technology. Modernistic movements were, therefore, the forerunners of the notion of the full integration of technology in the arts, even though this notion could not be completely realised because of the lack of necessary means.

The most appropriate place to start in order to explore the relation of theatrical directing and technology is the work of Richard Wagner. The practical implications of the use of technology for the direction of Wagner's operas' was particularly important, as well as far-reaching, since the development of his concept of the *Total Artwork*, the 'Gesamtkunstwerk', that suggested a specific relationship between theatre and stage technology, has influenced director's theatre.[172] Wagner believed that an 'artistic man can only fully content himself by uniting every branch of art into the common

[171] For example, the irresistible call of technology inspired one of the utopian philosophical arguments developed by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger, who argued that technology was bound up with the idea of 'revealing', according to which technology reveals the totality of the human being. Martin Heidegger, 'The question concerning technology', in D. F. Krell, ed., *Basic writings: Martin Heidegger* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 287-317.

[172] Wagner developed these ideas in his prose writings 'Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft' (The Artwork of the Future) (1850) and 'Oper und Drama' (Opera and Drama) (1851). See Richard Wagner, *The Art-Work of the Future, and Other Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (Lincoln, Neb. and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1993).

artwork'.[173] For theatrical directing this meant that every detail must have been considered thoroughly, so as to maintain balance and harmony, or else coherence, throughout the theatrical event, as well as that all arts are joined and fused in equal terms in order to produce 'an understanding of the feeling'[174] or the emotionalising of the intellect so the action can be explained only 'when it is completely vindicated by the feeling'.[175] Specifically, as Michael Kirby has observed, 'the use of a series of prosceniums created an optical illusion, a distorting perspective, which made the performers seem larger than they really were.'[176] Wagner also designed and constructed a sophisticated pioneering audio mixing system for the Festspielhaus in Bayreuth (opened 1876) to enhance the impression of the stage as a 'dream machine'. He put a hidden orchestra in a hole in the ground and designed an efficient system of huge curved cowl funnels that led the sound directly on to stage. In this way, Wagner's use of the technological innovations of that period had the intention, according to Baugh, of making 'the game of absorption more effective and acceptable for his audience.'[177] Wagner's directorial paradigm of convergence then, revealed the unity of the *Total Artwork* and was significantly dependant on the use of the latest technology. Wagner's directing seems to have suggested that the medialites of technology could produce a total theatre theatricality meaning balance, harmony, and coherence that induce the spectator into entering into a particular state of perception modeled on dreams.

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[173] Richard Wagner in his essay 'The Art-Work of the Future' (1849) reproduced in R. Packer and K. Jordan, eds., *Multimedia: From Wagner to Virtual Reality* (New York: Norton, 2001), 4.
[174] E. T. Kirby, *Total Theatre: A Critical Anthology* (New York: Dutton, 1969), 5.
175 Ibid, 6.

[176] Michael Kirby, *Formalist Theatre* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 56.
[177] Christopher Baugh, *Theatre, Performance and Technology*, 147.

The theory of the architect and set designer Adolphe Appia seems to offer one of the first - still not surpassed - theoretical models concerning the use of the set and lighting design in theatre. Even though Appia was not a director his place in this section is crucial since his ideas significantly influenced directing. Appia engaged in lighting experiments at the Hellerau Institute in Germany with the help of the lighting technician Mariano Fortuny.[178] Fortuny's efforts culminated in the 'Fortuny system', which was widely used in European theatres, and provided reflected light through the use of a semi-spherical sky-dome, enclosing most of the space above and behind the acting area.[179] Appia's starting point was the notion of 'eurhythmics' which aimed to enhance the actor's movement that was governed by rhythm.[180] Expanding this theory he argued that space, which was subject to 'the will of shifting light', could be transformed into the most expressive element of the theatrical production through the theory of 'rhythmic spaces'. According to this, the play of light and shadow within the stage setting contributes to the notion of a dynamic dramatic space.[181] His aesthetics approached a kinetic - alive, deeply expressive and emotive - set design in a dynamic interactive relationship with the performer. Appia's ideas seem to have suggested that the mediality of lighting could produce a dynamic theatricality.

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[178] Mariano Fortuny registered patents such as the 'Fortuny Cyclorama Dome' (in 1904), which could easily change stage lighting from a bright sky to a faint dusk and the 'Fortuny Lamp', a reflector lamp which worked on the same principle (stage lighting). 'Mariano Fortuny.' Encyclopaedia Britannica, accessed July 9, 2012. <http://www.britannica.com/ EBchecked/topic/214343/Mariano-Fortuny>; 'Fortuny', accessed July 9, 2012. <http:// www.fortuny.com/#/mariano_fortuny>. For more on Fortuny see also Appendix B.

[179] In particular, Appia's lighting theory included the model of 'diffused lighting' and 'formative lighting'. See also Appendix B.

[180] Eurhythmics forms the basis of the Emile Jacques-Dalcroze music method. In: 'Dalcroze Web Page', accessed Nov. 20, 2009. <http://www.dalcroze.ch/html/en/ furtryth.htm>. See also Appendix B.

[181] Specifically designed with platforms of varying heights, ramps, stairs, walls, and pillars, could allow the actor varied movements.

Even the work of theatrical directors, who were ideologically and aesthetically in favour of realism, were critically influenced by the innovations in technology. For instance, the Russian directors Konstantin Stanislavsky and Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko not only applied technology in their productions, but also their directorial work at the Moscow Art Theatre was marked by stage technology. The use of many noisy set changes, for example, influenced their directing style by making unavoidable endless and long in duration scenes in order for the applications of the stage-mechanics to be completed. But their sound and special effects were unsurpassed.[182] An example is related to the production of Chekhov's *The Seagull* (Moscow Art Theatre, 1898).[183] The imaginative sound effects by Stanislavsky, such as the croaking of the frogs or the cry of the corncrake, affected the creation of a realistic atmosphere, operating at the same time, on a psychological and emotional level, which constituted the trademark of his directing.[184] Consequently, the implications of the use of technology for realistic directing were enormous. The personal connection of the actor with the materials,[185] meant that the sound and lighting affected the emotions of the characters and enhanced their physiognomic awareness (the technological artifice of the stage) developing an

[182] See Michael Glenny and William Lee Kinsolving, 'Soviet Theatre: 2 Views', *Drama Review* 11: 3 (Spring, 1967): 114.
[183] David Krasner, *A History of Modern Drama*, Vol. 1 (Chichester, UK: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd., 2011), 119-121.
[184] Bella Merlin, *Konstantine Stanislavsky* (London: Routledge, 2003), 95-96.
[185] See 'external' and 'inner' attention in Stanislavsky. Constantin Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares*, trans. Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood (London: Eyre Methuen, 1980), 72- 94.

aesthetic strategy - the aesthetics of realism, based on the notions of beauty and utility - with the hope of reaching 'the real'.[186]

The use of electricity and the mechanics of the Victorian stage provided fruitful ground for further experimentation in the case of the director Edward Gordon Craig. Craig's attempt to perfect the illusion of the dramatic world led him to use an extraordinary lighting system for his time,[187] which incorporated lighting plans for astonishing chiaroscuro and changeable lighting effects.[188] In order to cause a visually stimulating effect, his figures were predominantly lit by a single cone red light from above under a dark stage.[189] Craig's minimal settings with colour contrasts and variable geometrical configurations, in combination with the black and white sacking costumes of the actors, underlined a symbolic directing. However, Craig's major architectural and performative conception was the moving scenic space which developed in his theoretical work *Scene* (1923). In this study he made an attempt to define the role of the 'screens' - sequences of scenic images mechanically controlled - implicating and expanding other aspects of theatrical art, such as acting (and the movements of the

[186] 'The oscillation between the concrete detail of realism and a poetics of abstraction is a constructive tension of the modern stage.' Alan Ackerman and Martin Puchner, eds., *Against Theatre: Creative Destructions on the Modernist Stage* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillian, 2006), 5.
[187] The construction of a lighting- bridge in the proscenium with an operator and electric lamps with coloured filters above and behind the opening, floor standing lamps, spots hidden in boxes standing in the auditorium, grey gauzes on a stretcher and light projected through the gauzes, huge (blue and light grey) cloth/canvas in front of the back wall stage-cloth onto which huge shadows projected, holes pierced in the black cloth and back lit with revolving perforated discs in front of the lamps causing the lit to come and go and produce a cascade effect etcetera. See Christopher Baugh, *Theatre, Performance and Technology*, 148-153.
[188] That he used to call 'Rembrandt' effects.
[189] Like the theatre's Spot Lights today.

actor).[190] In this way Craig's directing seems to have suggested that the medialites of moving scenic space with the help of technology could contribute significantly to the symbolic theatricality. As a result the specific staging of bodies in different media such as the lighting and the screen or the movable set design conveyed a specific perception about the stage enhancing the notion of theatricality.

Additionally, machine's aesthetics (automobiles, airplanes, film and electricity) reflected the proliferation, propagation and dominance of the machine in the modern society. Rutsky states that machine's aesthetics was 'an aesthetic, a style, a simulation of the rationalised, standardised forms of machines and factories, often abstracted from any functional or instrumental context.'[191] It was promoted then by those artists, who saw a beauty in the machine, a beauty in its appearance and its function, like the Futurists. Futurist theatre directors[192] had an enthusiastic and zealous faith in technology and emphasized, as Kroker mentions, the 'ideological inscriptions hidden in the formal structure of technology'.[193] In their manifestos they used mathematical formulas in order to refer to a new type of theatre, namely 'synthetic theatre'.[194]

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[190] For more on Graig's design patent 'screens' (since 1910) see Edward Gordon Craig, and John Masefield, *Scene* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968, c. 1923) and Christopher Innes, *Edward Gordon Craig: A Vision of the Theatre* (London: Routledge, 1998), 285-287.

[191] R. L. Rutsky, *High Techne*, 11.

[192] Such as Gualtiero Tumiati, Ettore Berti, Annibale Ninchi, Luigi Zoncada. See Günter Berghaus, *Theatre, Performance, and the Historical Avant-Garde* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 91.

[193] 'Everything here plays at the edge of the ecstasy of speed and the detritus of inertia; a psychoanalysis of war machines where fascination turns into psychosis and this architectural installation forces to the surface the ideological inscriptions hidden in the formal structure of technology (the visual continuity of the dancing ballerina can only be maintained by the flattening of the image, and us with it, at warp speeds); and we are ideologically positioned as inert observers of the spectacle of velocity in ruins.' Arthur Kroker, *The Possessed Individual: Technology and Postmodernity* (London: Macmillan, 1992), 23-24.

[194] 'Painting + sculpture + plastic dynamism + words-in-freedom + composed noise + architecture = synthetic theatre'. See Italian Futurists manifestos quoted in Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 47.

Futurists, furthermore, launched the idea of 'synthetic performers'. Dixon and Smith mention that, 'they replaced actors with representative shapes composed of points and rows of coloured lights, which rhythmically darken and light up, rotate, form nebulas, and disintegrate'.[195] In this way futurist's concepts investigated for the first time the implications of technology not only to the stage/space - evoking a plastic dynamism with the use of electro-mechanical architecture and luminous chromatic sources, electric currents, coloured gases, and coloured lights -, but also to the performer's body. Through intensive, frenetic and violent representation of visible and audible elements on stage, they supported that technology mediates the magnitude of an emitting energy. This artistic identification emphasised the potential of a new theatrical application expressed in Meyerhold's work.

The Russian theatre director Vsevolod Meyerhold created radically stylised theatre productions deeply influenced by the movements of futurism and constructivism.[196] He developed his own performer training system called 'biomechanics' embracing the ideology and aesthetics of the new mechanised age[197] based on the theories of American engineer Frederic Winslow Taylor on 'Taylorism'[198]

[195] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 56.
[196] His ideas, deeply influenced by constructivists, believed that the value of the scientific approach and the detailed analysis of the theatrical production/structure would permit a new theatrical synthesis from the already established essential theatrical elements. See Kenneth Pickering, *Key Concepts in Drama and Performance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 126-130. For more on the principles of the industrial designs of the Russian constructivism and the role of the artists in the design of the production process itself see Maria Gough, *The Artist as Producer: Russian Constructivism in Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). See also Appendix B.
[197] See Mel Gordon, *Dada Performance* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1987), 88-89.
[198] 'Taylorism' is a scientific system of organising labour in order to increase work efficiency on the basis of exact calculation of the period of labour and refreshment break. F. W. Taylor attempted this theory to

and reflexology.[199] In his 'The Actor of the Future and Biomechanics' (1922),[200] Meyerhold explained the connection between 'Taylorism' and 'biomechanics' in the following way:

> The formula for acting may be expressed as follows: N = A1 + A2 (where N = the actor; A1 = the artist who conceives the idea and issues the instructions necessary for its execution; A2 = the executant who executes the conception of A1). The actor must train his material (the body), so that it is capable of executing instantaneously those tasks which are dictated externally (by the actor, the director). In so far as the task of the actor is the realization of a specific objective, his means of expression must be economical in order to ensure that precision of movement which will facilitate the quickest possible realization of the objective.[201]

Actors, like an engine, shift their energy from the point of visualising a fictional reality to an attempt to present the dramatic action through their physicality.[202]

Meyerhold profoundly being influenced by the machine aesthetics developed a distinctive directorial formalistic style reflecting problematisations related to composition, construction, excess, 'faktura', tectonics, function, production, and process inspired by technology's experimentations. [203] He also proposed a stage setting, a skeleton structure, stripped of every shred of decoration and made up specifically as a

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raise workers' output. Other modes of systemic organisation of the capital-labour process were Fordism (named after Henry Ford).

[199] Reflexology is a theory in psychology that explains human reflex actions and their relation to behaviour.

[200] Vsevolod Meyerhold, 'The Actor of the Future and Biomechanics', in *Meyerhold on Theatre*, ed. and trans. Edward Braun (New York: Hill and Wang, 1969), 198.

[201] Erika Fischer-Lichte, *History of European Drama and Theatre*, 292.

[202] For more on biomechanics and engine see Rebecca Schneider and Gabrielle Cody, eds., *Re:direction: A Theoretical and Practical Guide* (London: Routledge, 2001), 61.

[203] 'Faktura' means texture or facture, a property of the sculpture, painting, verse and many other arts. It refers to the overall handling or working of the material constituents of a given medium, and thus to the process of production in general. The link with the theatre production is obvious.

necessary means for a more physically-based acting by using extensively ramps, scaffolding, wheels, and ladders. Actors scrambled over the bare structures, ran along the catwalks and slid down the ramps. He also used on stage objects, such as cars, motor cycles, telephones, lorries, threshing machines and kitchens and employed gantry cranes to carry the weight, searchlights placed in the auditorium, multiple-staging slides and, finally, film in order to, as Susan Sontag states, 'cinematify' theatre.[204] Additionally, during his performances, stage assistants were used as prompters, as scene and property shifters and they rearranged actors' clothing, inspired by the Japanese theatre practice called 'kurogo'. According to Maria Gough, Meyerhold mediates and reflects 'a phase of technologically inspired formal exploration'.[205] This means that director's creation, or else directorial auteurism or the presence of directors-auteurs is the work of those directors whose signature on the work is mediated to the audience.

Within this modernistic environment, the Austrian director Max Reinhardt, who has also been known as 'der große Magier', 'the great magician', developed his directing applying extensively technological innovations.[206] Reinhardt was deeply influenced by the theories of Craig and Appia and, as a result, his perception of a total

[204] See Susan Sontag, 'Film and Theatre' reproduced in *Performance: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies*, ed. Philip Auslander, Vol. 4. (London: Routledge, 2003), 301.
[205] Maria Gough, *The Artist as Producer*, 10.
[206] He introduced the idea of 'mass audience', which carries a political overtone on the same scale as the Greek and Roman theatres. For more on this see Huntly Carter, *The Theater of Max Reinhardt* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1964); Oliver Sayler, *Max Reinhardt and his Theatre*, trans. Mariele S. Gudernatsch and Others (New York, Benjamin Blom, 1968); J. L. Styan, *Max Reinhardt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1982); Edward Braun, *The Director and the Stage*, 95-108.

theatre supported the notion of the fusion and synthesis of all art forms. [207] He wanted theatre to be 'a refined and high efficient instrument for receiving and transmitting the spirit of drama.'[208] However, it was Reinhardt's efficiency as a director and stage-manager that caused audiences in theatre to speak of 'the Reinhardt machine.'[209] Günter Berghaus states:

> Max Reinhardt's wizardry as a director depended to a large extent on the ingenuity of his technical staff, who made use of new technologies in order to create stage effects one had never seen before.[210]

Reinhardt's vision was realised via the technological breakthrough in contemporary control mechanisms. First, he used the revolving stage extensively because it provided endless possibilities for representing five or six sets simultaneously, changing scenes quickly and, as a result, representing a continuous sequence of action.[211] Second, he used the hydraulic machinery, which was designed to move parts of the stage floor and shift scenic units, in order to complete the impression of a wholly functional stage.[212] Third, he used the sky-dome frequently, the 'Rundhorizont', invented by Fortuny, who had also been Appia's collaborator. This was a silken canopy suspended high over the stage area, onto which diffused light could be directed to create an impression of infinite space. Reinhardt additionally developed the hooded plaster cyclorama, the 'Kuppelhorizont', which cupped the whole stage. This was lit by a wide

[207] J. L. Styan, *Max Reinhardt*, 108.
[208] Huntly Carter, *The Theater of Max Reinhardt*, 2.
[209] J. L. Styan, *Max Reinhardt*, 115; Oliver Sayler, *Max Reinhardt and his Theatre*, 75-112.
[210] Günter Berghaus, *Theatre, Performance and the Historical Avant-Garde*, 87.
[211] The 'Drehbühne' or 'turntable' stage was first used by Karl Lautenschläger in Munich in 1896. The Japanese had been using turntables since the eighteenth century.
[212] J. L. Styan, *Max Reinhardt*, 115.

floodlight of diffused light, which was placed above the centre of the stage and constructed so as to throw its rays of light horizontally and not vertically giving the impression of a soft reflected light. In this way, the mood of the whole setting could rapidly change.[213] Finally, Reinhardt was one of the first directors who introduced the electric keyboard or 'console'. The operator could play the lighting console like a pipe organ and, therefore, could control several batteries of lanterns simultaneously, as well as, to project clouds, stars and a variety of other scenic images from the rear of the auditorium.[214] All the available mechanical equipment of the day - the great dome, cloud machine, revolving stage - was fully used by Reinhardt with the intention to transform the stage into a giant toy-clock-work mechanism (stage effects that mediated dramatic effects). The above medialities of the stage articulated the exposure of a new theatricality shaping spectator's reactions.

The theatrical event was then articulated by using the visual language of the modern world, on borrowing methods and objects from the new scientific environment and using the language developed by the engineers.[215] Bauhaus artists[216] such a Walter Gropious, László Moholy-Nagy, and Oskar Schlemmer used motorised movement, kinetic sculpture, mechanised geometric spaces, automata, lighting, sound, craftsmanship, engineering, and photomontage as foundations for a new vision in arts in

[213] For more information on this techniques see J. L. Styan, *Max Reinhardt*, 115; Huntly Carter, *The Theater of Max Reinhardt*, 174.
[214] J. L. Styan, *Max Reinhardt*, 115.
[215] For them the exalted power of the figure of the engineer shifted the engineer's role into the absolute art-maker, who builds bridges, buildings, making cars with the aid of technology. RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1988), 97-120.
[216] The Bauhaus school founded in Germany in 1919.

order to create an utopian 'mechanical/technical organism'.[217] They also conceived and examined the idea of 'polymedia' work. For example, the choreographer Oskar Schlemmer juxtaposed several media on stage and made experiments with kinetic 'light sculptures', which were created to manipulate the lighting shapes and sources on stage. At the same time, pioneering filmmakers such as Sergei Eizenstein, Dziga Vertov, Vsevolod Pudovkin, and others explored the new possibilities of the camera and montage to the expression of a new cinematic visuality.[218] Eisenstein proposed a 'Taylorization' for the cinema and Vertov proposed an understanding of cinema's power through the montaging 'eye'.[219] Fragmentation, re-ordering and re-animation of bodies and body parts were some of the cinematic methods which could be traced in theatrical directing. Dixon and Smith say on the cinematic in the theatre and performance:

> Throughout the twentieth century, not only did live performance integrate film into productions, but both mainstream and experimental theater also competed with cinema in terms of its own sense of spectacle, and theater became more cinematic in conception, particularly in the latter half of the century. Play-writing saw increasing use of short scenes, cross-cut parallel action, and the use of flash-backs and dramatic time shifts, while theater staging drew inspiration from the cinema, increasingly employing neocinematic devices such as the introduction of incidental music and the use of lighting to create sharp montage or gentle dissolve effects. This aimed to intensify the theatrical experience, and to approximate cinema's absolute control of space and time, and the flow and location of the audience's attention.[220]

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[217] See Mel Gordon, 'A history of the theatre of the Future (To 1984)', *Theater* 26:1 (Sept. 1995): 13- 31.
[218] Eisenstein intergraged actors with filmed decoration. See also Appendix B.
[219] For more on Vertov's kino-eye theory see Dziga Vertov, *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, ed. Annette Michelson and trans. Kevin O'Brien (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984). For more on the Eisenstein's montage theory see Sergei M. Eisenstein, *Towards a Theory of Montage*, ed. Michael Glenny and Richard Taylor, vol. 1 and 2 (London: BFI Publishing, 1991). See also Appendix B.
[220] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 10.

The mechanisation of the stage design and the new cinematic approaches through the use of the film medium offered new potentialities for expanding the work of the theatre director.[221] These medialities conveyed a specific perception of the director's theatre according to which directing operated as the way of modernisation, an updating visual framing and stylisation.

Additionally, the German director Erwin Piscator developed his directorial model influenced by the developments in revolutionary Russia, the progress of American technology, and the devastating experience of World War I.[222] Epic theatre (the most known category of political theatre) reflected his basic concerns that theatre should carry a far greater weight of authenticity through the principle of totality.[223] This means that a political play, which had so far solely a didactic function (Lehrstück), could be also developed from what might at first glance appear to be a spectacle-play (Schaustück).[224] His ideas offered a new theoretical insight into the use of the technology-based effects for propagandistic purposes.[225] Consequently, with the help of the latest technology, Piscator mediated the aesthetics of an adjustable, non-rigid, mobile stage, which embodied the 'dramatic epic principle'. He sought solutions to the

[221] For representative examples, see Ben Brewster, *Theatre to Cinema: Stage Pictorialism and the Early Feature Film*, ed. by Lea Jacobs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Sergei Eisenstein, 'The Cinematic Principle and Ideogram', in *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, ed. and trans. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1977), 28 – 44; Sergei Eisenstein, 'Through Theatre to Cinema,' in *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, 3 -17; André Bazin, *What is Cinema?,* trans. Hugh Gray (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).
[222] Piscator, Ervin, 'The Theatre Can Belong to Our Century', in *The Theory of the Modern Stage. From Artaud to Zola: An Introduction to Modern Theatre and Drama*, ed. Eric Bentley (Harmondsworht: Penguin, 1992), 471- 473; Edward Braun, *The Director and the Stage*, 130-134; Samuel Leiter, *The Great Stage Directors: 100 Distinguished Careers of the Theater* (New York: Facts on File, 1994), 223.
[223] See above on the Wagnerian notion of Total Theatre.
[224] Piscator's production of *Hoppla, Wir Leben* (1927), in Erwin Piscator, *The Political Theatre*, ed. Hugh Rorrison (London: Eyre Methuen, 1980), 39.
[225] Edward Braun, *The Director and the Stage*, 145-161.

simultaneous staging of scenes (cinematification of theatre), the use of film, slides and loudspeaker systems (sound effects),[226] the ensemble's kinetic rhythm and the flexible dramatic structures.[227]

First, he used a sequence of autonomous scenes flowing quickly from one to another (borrowing the technique of film montage), which was likely to produce a number of juxtapositions (to create a contrasting effect) contributing to an overall impression of recreating on stage the modes of the modern world, rather than a disconnected démodé narrative plot-line.[228] Second, the best known machinery he used was the 'treadmill', which was a flat, endless, electrically powered conveyor belt, which was backed with white flats. [229] The actors could roll on or off the stage and could march against the treadmill without moving from the spot. In this way, cut-out objects and figures passed across the stage by moving past a projection screen. As a result, the treadmill device became a scenic gimmick and a necessary component of the action. In this way the director mediated the idea of the mechanisation of the stage and the use of mechanical apparatus in order to promote dramatic action. Third, the complex construction of his stage design was defined by the use of the cyclorama, revolving stage, adjustable rostrum - functional multi-purpose scaffolding, which could be

[226] Sound effects such as listening to the heartbeats of a sick hero, traffic intersection on the stage, the sound of the railway, underground, trams bells, cars hoots etcetera.
[227] He preferred plays with many short scenes.
[228] Kenneth Pickering, *Key Concepts in Drama and Performance*, 35.
[229] 'Unfortunately they did not function smoothly and were too noisy. The bands clattered, rattled and puffed till the whole building shook. The best technicians could do was to insert strips of felt and use great quantities of grease, to reduce the noise so that very loud words could get through. But there was the problem of expense, for these devices were costly even given the lavish scale on which German theatres were used to working'. John Willett, *The Theatre of Ervin Piscator: Half a Century of Politics in the Theatre* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1979), 113-114.

dismantled and erected in any surroundings -, a series of platforms of different levels interconnected by steps, moving walls – a series of wooden screens moved on wheels -, and lifts stretching right across the stage capable of being used as acting areas at any level.[230] Finally, the use of film for prologue and interludes structurally facilitated the deeper understanding of the play by the audience. The director has said on this: 'I need the means to show the interaction between the great human factors and the individual or class. One of these means was film.'[231] It was the first time that film had supplemented theatre for dramatic purposes.

Bertold Brecht, who had been Piscator's student, was also inspired by the constructivist ideal of the 'total re-functioning' - 'Umfunktionierung'- of the theatre 'process'.[232] The means to achieve this were the closest possible creative collaboration between the director and a number of different multi-disciplinary artists, such as Caspar Neher (1897-1962) who combined the skills of a dramatist, director and scenographer.[233] Brecht's 'epicization' included the practice of a sequence of short scenes supported by a sparse set, which relied significantly on stage technology - for example the revolving stage for the carriage in *Mother Courage*-, titles and texts of songs projected on upstage screens and the use of film for commentary and

[230] The setting was by László Moholy- Nagy for the play *Der Kaufmann von Berlin* (1929) by Walter Mehring performed in Theater am Nollendorfplatz (Berlin). For more on this production see John Willett, *The Theatre of Ervin Piscator*, 98-100.
[231] Piscator quoted in Michael Patterson, *The revolution in German Theatre 1900-1933* (Boston: Routledge and K. Paul, 1981), 125.
[232] Christopher Baugh, *Theatre, Performance and Technology*, 77. For the Piscator and Brecht's collaboration see John L. Styan, *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice: Expressionism and Epic Theatre*, vol.3. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1981), 139.
[233] Christopher Baugh, *Theatre, Performance and Technology*, 74-81. For more on the work and life of Caspar Neher see the critical biography by John Willett, *Caspar Neher: Brecht's designer* (London and New York: Methuen, 1986).

illustration.[234] Brecht used directorial strategies, such as being himself as a director on stage during the performance, by allowing the audience to watch not only the preparations for each scene, but also to be aware of the whole technical apparatus of the theatrical production while they were watching the play, contributing to the development of his unique directorial style and theatricality, namely the 'Verfremdungseffekt', meaning the 'estrangement', 'alienation', 'distancing' of the audience from the action. Brecht and Neher extended the metaphor of 'theatre as a machine' by developing the notion of 'the constructing of a machine for performance' aiming for a functionality as a machine type of theatre process.[235] Brecht also helped to establish the idea that the entire *mise en scène* should shift to the status of a 'model' through this marking the art of directing as something systematic. In this way Brecht had envisioned a theatre 'fit for the scientific age' and an 'art as a dynamo'.[236]

From the above historical paradigms of the early avant-garde directors one can conclude that the relationship between directing and technology is profoundly linked with the theatrical aesthetics, therefore theatricality and mediality are intimately connected. Technology seems to have been, since the first appearance of the role of the director, one of the major conveyors of the directorial intentions inextricably connected with specific ideologies for theatrical aesthetics. In this way my argument related to the development of the directorial role through the applications of technology seems so far

[234] Peter Szondi, 'Epic Theater: Brecht', in *Theory of the Modern Drama: A Critical Edition*, ed. and trans. Michael Hays (Cambridge: Polity in association with Blackwell, 1987), 67-73.
[235] Christopher Baugh, *Theatre, Performance and Technology*, 75.
[236] Brecht in the Prologue of the *Short Organum for the Theatre* first published in 1948. Brecht, 'A Short Organum for the Theatre', 179- 209.

to have been effectively supported by the medialities of technology suggested by the early innovators. The consequence is that technology has been since the beginning the main aspect of the director-creator role, which was the exploring of some of the most basic questions about the modes and styles of representation in order to interpret the play's themes. Therefore, the representational possibilities opened up. The realistic/illusionistic strategy seemed to evolve into highly/ultra realistic/illusionistic and the fantastic/symbolic into highly/ultra fantastic/symbolic creating an ongoing immersive spectacle for the audience. This is evidence that the use of technology facilitated a director's main intention for focusing the audience's attention, channelling their emotions and affecting their experience. In other words, technology comprised a theatrical 'experience of intensity', conveyed the effect of 'presence' and has theatricality. The above have proved that there is an efficacious change, shift and development of the directorial role. In this way, mediality in the theatre can be understood as a complex theatrical process that arises when theatrical entities or elements involved within a performance context (acting, dramatic dialogue/action, scenography, audio-visual signs) alter the modes of audience perception about the generated meaning (performance's context and director's ideology-aesthetics) by *the transferring of the dramatic content from one theatrical medium to another*. As a result, mediality contributes in the understanding of theatricality, which is the essential communicative relationship between the stage and the audience. Both theatricality and mediality since the work of the early avant-garde directors seems to be the main work of the director.

TECHNOLOGY'S MULTI-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION IN THE WORK OF THEATRE DIRECTORS

Having supplied in this chapter the foundations in terms of the theory of mediality, the theoretical context of theatricality, and their relations with the art of directing and I have additionally explored how the mediality of technology works within these concepts and the ways in which technology has mediated theatricality in the theatrical environment through the directorial making process of early innovators, I will proceed to show how the above theory has shifted to a theory of multi-mediality. This will help me to draw conclusions on how the work of the director has changed, shifted and developed through the medialities of technology. How the work of the director, with the use of technology, has given rise to a certain type of a director-creator, whose role has been developed together with the medialities of technology.

Historically the notion of multi-mediality in the theatre started as the phenomenon of the constellation, mutual dependency and interaction of several different media such as acting, movement/dance, painting/set design, light, music/sound, in order to produce a dramatic effect that alters the existing-usual reception and the constitution of meaning in the performance. However, the apotheosis of multi-mediality in the theatre came with the use of multimedia technologies (photography, film, TV, video, mikes, vocalises, computers graphics, lasers, light/audio sensors, and sophisticated consoles) which produced a coherent dramatic form and resulted in a new theatrical genre: the multi-

media theatre.[237]As a result multi-mediality is to a great extent linked with the development of multimedia technology and a set of ideas closely related to the role of the director. The most discernable dramatic effects that are established by the multi-mediality are either the synergy between different media, which forms a distinctive theatrical pattern-representation, as, for example, in the genre of total theatre, which is based on the notion of the unification/synergy of all arts and media, or it is the mode of contra/anti-synergy between different arts and media, which forms equally a distinctive theatrical pattern-representation, as for example, in the theatre of estrangement[238] and its evolution, to the theatre of deconstruction.[239]

The incursion of the mediatised into the live event constitutes an evolution of theatrical directing by multiplying possible incidences, interactions and promoting a dialectical relationship (synergy or anti-synergy) between source materials (actors' bodies, play, design and technology) and modes of presenting them (directorial aesthetic style and logic) within the framework of multi-mediality. Performance theorist Philip Auslander has observed that 'theatre is only one element amongst many operating in a mediatised cultural system'.[240] Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt in turn have defined the mediatised representation as:

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[237] For a semiotic analysis (semiotic theory) of directing multi-media theatre see Jon Whitmore, *Directing Postmodern Theater: Shaping Signification in Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

[238] For the 'theatre of estrangement' see Silvija Jestrovic, *Theatre of Estrangement: Theory, Practice, Ideology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

[239] For the 'theatre of deconstruction' see Mark Fortier, *Theory/ Theatre* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 58-69. See also Steven Connor, 'Postmodern Performance', in *Postmodernist Culture: An Introduction to the Theories of the Contemporary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 132- 137.

[240] The theorist Peggy Phelan locates an 'ontology of performance' in its 'disappearance', 'eventhood' (through the essentialist event) and 'ephemerality' that 'evade reproduction', see Peggy Phelan,

> ... utilizing recording and playback technologies (or at least assume the intervention of a technological transmission device); no matter whether what is recorded is played back at nearly the same time or at a later moment.[241]

However, 'the mediatised' should not be mixed with 'the mediated'. According to Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt there is a clear cut distinction between them:

> Mediatized is not the same as mediated because all forms of communication are mediated by signs, but not mediatized by technology.[242]

According to Nick Kaye the use of mediatised audiovisual materials, recorded or technologically produced, amplifies 'division, difference and multiplication' clearly noting the anti-synergic mode.[243] However, I consider that multimedia technologies can operate-interact either illusionary/convergently (synergic), or anti-illusionary/ deconstructively (anti-synergic) within the context of multi-mediality amplifying the notion of theatricality. Kaye states that mediatised performance mediates in the following ways:

> ... with the reassertion of 'presence', even as the conventional means of asserting the performer's 'place' and 'authority' are dispersed; with the convergence of media, performance and language, even as the theatre multiplies the means and

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Unmarked: The Politics of Performance (London: Routledge, 1993), 146-166. Auslander argues that live performance cannot be said to have ontological or historical priority over mediatisation. This is because 'liveness' was made visible only by 'the possibility of technical reproduction.' So 'the live' is only known in its opposition to the mediated and so in its difference from and deferral to 'the mediated'. Auslander reads 'the live' as the 'absent object of mediatization'. See Philip Auslander, *Liveness*, 43-63.

[241] Chapple and Kattenbelt, eds., *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance*, 23.

[242] Ibid, 23.

[243] Nick Kaye, *Multi-media*, 9. 'Division of 'presence, action, place, and representation' is broadly associated with a postmodern performance characterized by 'quotation, appropriation, displacement' and 'a critique of the presence of the performer linked to deconstruction.' Ibid, 163.

> channels of address; and with the return of narrative and role even as the dissonance and differences of the media set 'character' and 'narrative' apart from themselves.[244]

Even in Kaye's terminology one can discern the dual operating logic (reassertion through dispersion, convergence through multiplicity, return through dissonance and difference) of medialities such as acting and 'presence', 'media, performance, language' and drama, 'narrative' and 'role', under the enactment of multi-mediality.

Auslander in his book *Liveness* (1999) also identifies the key tenets of this interesting relationship (the live and the mediatised) contributing in the theory of multi-media theatre and performance. He suggests that the opposition between live performance and mass media 'is not an opposition rooted in essential differences', but it is an opposition that 'exists only at a level of a cultural economy.'[245] Therefore, he proposes that 'liveness must be examined not as global undifferentiated phenomenon but within specific cultural and social contexts'.[246] According to his historical analysis those involved in early television production first took as their objective the replication of the theatre spectators' visual experience. That is why mediatised performances were modelled on live performances. In the course of time the current concepts of proximity and intimacy started to derive from the paradigm of television. As a result *the incursion of mediatisation into the live events* can be understood as means of making the live

[244] Ibid, 163-164.
[245] When Auslander refers to 'cultural economy' he poses the phenomenon within the real economic relations among cultural forms which is subject to contentiously changing historical and technological circumstances. Philip Auslander, *Liveness*, 159.
[246] Ibid, 3.

events respond to the need for a televisual intimacy. Therefore, live theatre has become more and more like television and imitates other mediatised cultural forms.

The essential elements of multi-mediality are: representation/narration by means of mediatisation, multiplicity (for example multiple narrativity and intertextuality), interdisciplinary creativity (for example the cross-disciplinary blending of art forms and media), and continuous flow of mediatised information following televisual aesthetics. I will now focus on the notion of multiplicity as a fundamental characteristic. There are two ways of approaching and understanding the notion of multiplicity in multi-medial directing: either through multiplication, which is the direct consequence of the reproducibility of audiovisual signs or through the division of the parts of the whole, the disarticulation, the dismemberment, or the decomposition of the work. Directors, therefore, choose to raise awareness of the most audiovisual and stagey aspects of theatricality by enhancing the multimedia technologies' effects. This is how theatre directors seek to create new forms of theatre. These effects are: multiplicity which is the coexistence and communication of more than two media; enhanced immersion which is the enhanced experience of being inside the world of a constructed/artificial spectacle, such as when the audience lose themselves in the medium by engaging all the senses (multisensory experience); the non-sequentially (in structure) associating of information; and two additional concepts fundamental to today's computer-based multimedia technologies: hyper-mediality which is the hyper-linking (the idea of following a new link by clicking/selecting a hyper-text or hyper-media) and interactivity which is when there is communication, dialogue and exchange between the different

technological processes and the audience, or when the audience intervenes in the spectacle.[247]

Multimedia technologies in the theatre opened up a new aesthetic ground for exploring body, image, time and space representations in a new illusionistic interplay. With the use of multimedia technologies the focus shifted to new vectors, and the mutual relationship of acting, dramaturgy, and design with the visuals. These can be found in a video camera point of view, from close-ups to distance views, the transmission of the dynamics of the camera's movement, the relation to image-sequence through experimental shooting/editing strategies, and the real-time closed-circuit multimonitor installations designed for the performance space and sound. Acting, drama, design, visuals (graphics, design, sound, lighting, film, video etcetera) and audio in multi-media theatre fuse in a non-hierarchical manner and directing draws attention to the transitions/interplay between them. But the main focus remains the different effects provided by the juxtaposition between live and mediatised performance.

This notion of juxtaposing technology with live art under the prism of an aesthetic and political character of contemporary culture has its historicity in Walter Benjamin. Benjamin with 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1936) was one of the first modern critics who predicted many of the new theoretical formulations

[247] For a further description of these key terms and several paradigms see Randall Packer, 'Artful Media: Just, What is Multi-media Anyway?', *IEEE MultiMedia*, 6.1 (Jan.-Mar., 1999): 11-13; R. Packer and K. Jordan, eds., *Multimedia: From Wagner to Virtual Reality* (New York: Norton, 2001), passim; Nick Kaye, 'Introduction: Live Video,' *Multi-Media: Video - Installation – Performance* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 9-27.

about art in the era of technology.[248] Benjamin supposed that the type of human sense perception changes with humanity's entire mode of existence. New forms of art or of representation produce new forms of perception. The desire to bring things 'closer' spatially and humanly, the urge to get hold of an object at very close range by way of its reproduction, the distraction of its aura, is the mark of a perception. For Benjamin *mechanical reproduction* of a work of art represented something new. The process of technical reproduction has the power to represent the work of art in a new system of representation, which is based on a notion far away from the idea of the unique aesthetic object. For him new forms of art representation produce new forms of perception. And new forms of perception produce new forms of social organisation. This seems to affirm Auslander's view in *Liveness* that a wholly new theatrical art, and as a result a new cognitive paradigm, which expands and develops the experience of the human perception, takes place with the debut of multi-mediality in theatre and performance. Therefore, technology (through the application of multimedia technologies by the directors) via issuing mediatised images and sounds, merging creative ideas with technological applications and acting as the protagonist of the dramatic action not only produces mediality but acquires an intensification/escalation of mediality by reaching the level of multi-mediality. Therefore, a shift is taking place, which inevitably mirrors in the work of the director.

Additionally, the diminishing of the production costs, the evolution of smaller and more flexible technological equipment, and the development of increasingly

[248] Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in *Illuminations*, ed. and trans. Hannah Arendt and Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969), 217-152.

sophisticated editing/projection techniques are some of the contributions of the theatrical directors during their exploitation of the multimedia technologies. These practices support a technophile aesthetics or technological aestheticism which was profoundly associated with the postmodern culture.[249] Microchips, circuit boards and computers began to stand as a visual metaphor of the concept that technology was no longer simply an instrument of human knowledge and control (instrumentality), but that there was a clear evolution towards an aesthetic autonomy. The fact that technology, on one hand, started to develop a life of its own and, on the other hand to indicate complexity, was associated with an aesthetic value far beyond the predictability and the controllability of the standard instrumental technology's mode. As a result, the technological aesthetic, according to R. L. Rutsky, based on 'an aesthetic of pastiche' started to indicate 'an aesthetic of complexity'.[250]

That was the moment when the technological complexity began to appear as autonomous and beyond human control, as a new paradigm of transgression, forcing links with the Freudian unconscious. According to Rutsky:

> ... a technological life or agency that is seen as 'beyond' human control or prediction often seems to invoke a sense of those 'older' supernatural or magical discourses that modernity, believing itself to have surpassed, figures as 'dark', 'irrational', 'superstitious', and 'primitive'.[251]

[249] For more on postmodernism see Philip Auslander, 'Toward a Concept of the Political in Postmodern Theatre' *Theatre Journal* 39.1 (Mar. 1987): 31; Philip Auslander, *From Acting to Performance: Essays in Modernism and Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1997), 39-45; Philip Auslander, *Presence and Resistance: Postmodernism and Cultural Politics in Contemporary American Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 83-104; Johannes Bertens and Joseph Natoli, eds., *Postmodernism: The Key Figures* (Malden, Mass. and Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 180.
[250] R. L. Rutsky, *High Techne*, 140.
[251] Ibid, 18.

As a result, the representation of technology gradually became the symbol of the repressed 'other life' or the repressed unconscious. Rutsky affirms that the technological unconscious:

> ... is the return of the repressed 'other' life which modernity associates with primal, libidinous urges and primitive, fetishist beliefs and which it figures in terms of a threatening monstrosity, mutation, miscegenation, mixture.[252]

The technological-cultural 'otherness' as a symbol of the increasing complexity of the techno-cultural world started to be expelled from the traditional, canon-bound, rational, Western modernity.[253] As a result, radical artistic creativity and works of art, which customarily emerged from the 'shadows' and from the 'hidden unconscious' of the artists, began to merge with the representation of technology. For example, in the 1960s, the technological aesthetics started to involve a kind of fetishism where technological devices were treated by artists as erotic aesthetic objects[254] and technology was seen as a fetishised 'object'.[255] The fear of the irrational or out-of-control monstrous technology began to merge with the fear of an unleashed sexuality, the radical social-political changing or the rebellious social behaviour against old authoritarianisms and conventional repressions. As a result, a new phase started to emerge in which the return

[252] Ibid, 105-106.
[253] Giannachi states that 'cyborgs, like centaurs, Amasons and golems represent the liminal zone of the human.' Gabriella Giannachi, *Virtual Theatres*, 45.
[254] Links with the techno-hybrid forms of rock-pop musical culture in Britain. The erotically charged embrace of technology can be identified in the art of Duchamp and Picabia, as well. See Barbara Zabel, *Assembling Art: The Machine and the American Avant-Garde* (Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi, 2004), 19.
[255] Directors being always in favour of the avant-garde and the representation of hybrid images of the body, as a means of articulating hidden collective desires and fears, explored and exploited the ideas of technological fetishism.

of elements, such as the magical, the animistic,[256] the hidden unconscious, the erotic, the irrational- and the monstrous started to be established through representation of technology within a postmodernist pastiche aesthetics that so far indicated the element of complexity. This presentation of technology progressively started to symbolise the complexity of the postmodern world.[257]

Now that I have identified the key theoretical issues I am in a position to make links with historical paradigms. The first place to start is the Happenings and Fluxus movements, which appeared in the late 1950s in New York and involved the co-presence of performers, film and video media supporting the notion of multi-mediality.[258] The mediality of dispersed television monitors, for example, playing programmes, while food (ice creams, hamburgers, tomato spaghetti), oil based paint or dirt were thrown at the screen came to be the major performative action, which intended to underline a stance of sharp criticism against the fetishised media (such as the TV set).[259] Additionally, film-theatre conjunctions were specifically increased in the 1960s because of the increasing affordability and accessibility of video equipment that supported the expansion of video art. Video became an effective element of the visualisation and structuring performances influencing the nature of the communication between the stage and the audiences. Performance groups such as the Filmstage by Roberts Blossom, New Theatre by Michael Kirby, Ontological Hysteric Theatre by

[256] 'Aestheticized technological forms were explicitly designed as a kind of spiritual edifice.' R. L. Rutsky, *High Techne*, 9.
[257] Richard Sheppard, *Modernism-Dada-Postmodernism* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2000), 356.
[258] For their work see Appendix B.
[259] The socially fetishised TV set. The exploitation of topics related to race, sexuality and radical politics.

Richard Foreman, Byrd Hoffman School of Byrds by Robert Wilson, The House by Meredith Monk, Moving Being by Geoff Moore, Squat Theater by Stephan Balint, Mabou Mines by Lee Breuer were constantly experimenting with film and video in their performances. As a result, the role of multimedia technology started to have greater impact in the visualisation, realisation and management of theatrical events.

An implication of these practices was that a new theatrical directorial genre started to emerge, termed by the American theatre scholar Bonnie Marranca as 'visual theatre' or 'theatre of images'[260] and by the theatre historian Arnold Aronson as 'formalist theatre'.[261] Influences such as the Cagean aesthetics, new dance, popular cultural forms, painting, sculpture and cinema shaped this new genre, which challenged traditional theatrical practices and incorporated multimedia technology as a main formative component. 'Theatre of images' was 'spectacular in visual content, scale and/or trickery'.[262] Consequently, the role of multimedia technology was to shape the spatial (abstract setting, surreal landscape) and temporal (timeless) features in directing and activate the sense stimuli of a generation of spectators who grew up with a variety of popular art forms, including television, film and rock/pop music.

Robert Wilson, one of the most well-known representatives of this highly stylised genre, has used lighting and its plastic qualities extensively in order to create a luminous

[260] See Bonnie Marranca, et. al., *Theatre of Images* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).
[261] Aronld Aronson, *American Avant-garde Theatre*: A History (London: Routledge, 2000), 79.
[262] The stillness of tableau was the most important unit of their composition. Actors poised in frontal positions using their body sculpturally, stopping or suspending the performance time. This directorial strategy had the intention to give time to the spectator to analyze the performance's construction-framework. Allain and Harvie, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance*, 214.

atmosphere and to fragment the bodies of the performers. In his performances a rhythm has been building up through the speedy succession of the lighting effects. In this way he has managed to achieve a change in the geometry of the performance space by contrasting elements of depth and surface, between the three-dimensional performance space (stage) and the two-dimensional space of the projected pictures (screen). According to Maria Shevtsova, Wilson has achieved 'a narrative and dramatic function of the coloured light by associating lighting with emotions.'[263] Additionally the director has given emphasis to noise, music or speech (aural elements) through microphones in order to further explore the variety of distance mechanisms through sound.[264] Wilson's main intention has been to mediate the notion that 'the entire stage can operate as a mask.'[265] To achieve this, light and sound technologies, on one hand, generated a dramatic narrative-action, whilst the stylised voices, movements, gestures and costumes of the performers, on the other, prompted a grotesque effect transmitting the effect of the stage masks. [266]

In Wilson's *Odyssey* (National Theatre of Greece in co-production with Piccolo Teatro di Milano-Teatro di Europa, October 2012 - March 2013), the actors' stylized and restrained gestus-movements were juxtaposed with multi-coloured lights and shapes designed to express the characters' emotions. In the scene of the Sirens the white-black ominous figures of the devilish-like mythological creatures were enhanced by deep

[263] Maria Shevtsova, *Robert Wilson* (London: Routledge, 2007), 63.
[264] Wilson has as his long-term collaborator, sound and light architect Hans Peter Kuhn. 'Hans Peter Kuhn. 'Hans Peter Kuhn Site, accessed July 10, 2012.<http://www.hpkuhn-art.de/hpk.html>.
[265] Wilson in Elinor Fucks, 'The PAJ Casebook: Alcestis' *Performing Arts Journal* 10.1 (1986): 102.
[266] It is the comedy of the hyperbolic that is frightening.

blue-black sublime lighting to communicate an abstract visual representation of the mysterious and the supernatural forces in Homer's world. The rhythm in this performance was created by changing the lighting colours in every scene in this way providing a dynamic counterpart to the motionless stage play. The gaps of silence between the actors contrasted with amplified sounds such as the sound of the buzzing flies in the scene where Odysseus departs Calypso's island. Wilson's directorial practices established a grotesque parody of the manifestations of heroic atmosphere through his fusion of motionless multi-coloured images, amplified by paradoxical sounds and poetic text as dramaturgy. This highly decorative style of Wilson's directing has declared that technology can become a major part of the creation of narrative images enhancing the connection of multi-mediality with theatricality.

In addition, cyberpunk aesthetics in the theatre refers to a noire-influenced narrative, a horrific cyberspace context, a digital surrealism and the mixture of high/low technology. It is an amalgamation of a frenetic, fragmented style, based on the aesthetics of MTV video clips, with dreamlike tones and an over-sentimental imagery;[267] an atmosphere of sheer weirdness stemmed from the unusual eroticism of hybrid figures, such as the cyborgs, and a forced fusion of organic and mechanical features, with influences from Japanese popular culture,[268] and the Matrix movie trilogy.[269] This implied the dystopian depiction of a new type of totalitarianism, such as in Orwell's

[267] See the video-dance images of Pina Bausch, and others for example Guillermo Gomez-Peña and his post-colonial imagery, Orlan's 'operating theatre' influenced by feminist/gender theories etcetera.
[268] Such as the *Pokemon* video game series by Nintendo released in 1996.
[269] See the film *Matrix* (1999).

world[270] or the depiction of the 'matrix' notion: a contemporary urban environment which suggests that the world is 'strange, weird, mutated, complex and no longer science-fictional'.[271] Directors are motivated by a cultural eclecticism: heterogeneity, fragmentation, disintegration, discontinuity and indeterminacy are the basic principles employed in their work of art in order to express their cultural resistance in an imminent dystopian nihilistic society.[272] Forms of bricolage, blurring, synthesised fusion of industrial and techno-music, the concept of laughter and carnivalesque, presentations of androgynous figures, bodily damage, biological transformations (or metamorphoses), violent aspects of sexuality - underlying the connection between the human body and society-, commercial marketplaces or industrial environments are some of the cyberpunk aesthetics that directors embrace in the theatre to indicate their 'rebellion.' This can be summed up as the apotheosis of postmodernism.

Directors within this context have worked with multimedia technologies basically through two methods. The first is the dialectical montage, which is the juxtaposition of short scenes, live or mediatised, and the structural synthesis in time and space of multimedia technologies' components, such as films and sounds. The second is the collage of diverse types of material or different genres (animation, TV advertisements, movies and video art).

[270] See the *Big Brother World* in George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eight-Four* (first published in 1949).
[271] See William Gibson's novel *Neuromancer* (first published in 1986).
[272] The era of techno-capitalism.

The surrealistic imaginary has been one of the main aesthetic qualities present throughout multi-medial directing and can be seen in the work of the directors Jan Fabre, Guillermo Gomez-Peña, Julian Maynard Smith and Miranda Payne (Station House Opera), Pete Brooks (Impact Theatre), Chris and Tim Britton (Forkbeard Fantasy), Tim Etchells (Forced Entertainment) and many more. Holographic or computer-generated imagery on stage and off has also emerged as a defining feature of this sort of theatre, which have stirred the imagination of audiences provoking feeling and thought. These have been used by the directors George Coates (Performance Works), John Jesurun, Giorgio Barberio Corsetti (La Gaia Scienza) and Laurie Anderson. Visual synecdoches have been employed to epitomise visual splendour and innovation by directors such as Peter Sellars, Vito Acconci, and Heiner Goebbels.

I have examined so far how technology (through multi-medial technologies) stands for a whole new logic of mediality: multi-mediality. The main implication was that by examining how theatrical performance functions in a mediatised culture, technology became, on one hand, the source for important artistic problematisations and inventive experimentations by the directors and, on the other, provided a noticeable impact on the audience's experience of stage theatricality. Consequently, multimedia technologies, as a theatre director's new tool, expressed a paradigmatic shift for theatrical directing. Therefore, the notion of multi-mediality in the theatre as interaction of several different media (synergic or anti-synergic) through the use of multimedia technologies has enriched theatricality and has altered critically the existing reception and interpretation in performance.

Until now I have demonstrated in this chapter the theory of mediality and multi-mediality and I have explained how technology mediates theatricality in two phases of the development of theatrical directing. This demonstration of the theoretical aspects of the work of the directors, who use technology in the theatre, has taken place not only to show how technology aids a director's theatre, but also how the role of the director has changed and shifted in the theatrical environment through the applications of technology which is the main focus of this thesis. The following theory to be examined is that of inter-mediality.

According to Christopher Balme inter-mediality can be defined as 'the transposition of subject matter from one medium to another medium', as 'a specific form of intertextuality' or as 'the re-creation of aesthetic conventions of one particular medium within a different medium.'[273] Consequently, inter-mediality (in Balme's terms) coalesces with the notion of mediality, which I have analysed before as 'the transposition of subject matter from one medium to another medium'. However, I consider the third definition as the most accurate, because it provides valuable vocabulary for comprehending the differences between dissimilar mediations and, therefore, I will use it for shaping my discussion.

[273] See Christopher Balme, *EinfuÈhrung in die Theaterwissenschaft* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1999), 154-156 reproduced in Chapple and Kattenbelt, eds., *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance*, 13.

In this definition inter-mediality is unveiled as the extension of the concept of the integration of various disciplines (medium within a different medium) and it is related to the wider influence of the reciprocity, mutual exchange and amalgamation (re-creation of aesthetic conventions) of different media. This type of mediation differs from a simple transfer of a dramatic content from one theatrical medium to another, from the simple constellation of several different media and the multiplication of possible incidences and interactions (synergy or anti-synergy) between them. Instead of transposition, constellation and multiplication Balme refers to a re-creation of one medium within another, which seems to be a more complicated and sophisticated phenomenon (remediation). In my case this definition proves to be extremely informative for my hypothesis: the dramatic production by the director based on the re-creation of theatrical values by the medium of technology or the re-creation of the functionality of technological apparatus through theatrical factors. Consequently, director's activity, which incorporates the medium of technology, becomes equally more complicated and sophisticated: directorial work changes and shifts profoundly from the phase of transferring-transposing meaning/interpretation by constellating and multiplicating signs, to a phase of remediating in order to mediate theatricality.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from these definitions is that the prefix 'inter' has different important consequences and implications rather than the prefix 'multi'. Inter-medial theatrical and performance works belong basically to a multi-media theatre, however the role of technology is key, since the different media, involving live or recorded/mediatised semiotic codes, become more interactive. This

empowers dynamics and new rules of the interplay providing not only a new genre, but also a new logic of theatre-making. Seen in this light inter-mediality in the theatre is linked to a new hybrid theatrical form. At this point, it is worth recalling Hans-Thies Lehmann's opinion that essential to the understanding of inter-mediality is the 'intermedial space' where 'the boundaries soften and we are in-between and within a mixing of spaces, media and realities.'[274] This opinion shows clearly that the phenomenon of inter-mediality in the theatre is the perfect metaphor that expands the scope of a developmental potentiality, which is the natural condition of the work of the director.

Consequently, in the case of inter-mediality the role of technology in the development of directing cannot be so obviously described and interpreted within the traditional framework of the theatricality. Another important finding is that, since directing relates to a great extent to the use of technology as a qualifying aspect of the directorial character, there seem to be no definite borders within a performance's materialities. Consequently the new type of directorial logic is based not only on the fact that it is combining different kinds of materials and media, but rather that of integrating technology. Thus the greater implication is that the mediation of the communicative and aesthetic aspects of technology is today an important part of how theatre directing is defined and understood. Consequently in the case of multi-mediality we have the combination of technology and directing while in inter-mediality there is the integration of the two elements. The shift from the one phase to the other is a

[274] Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, 171.

question of degree in the work of each director. In multi-mediality isolated media/mediators are simply combined (incorporated or represented) while in inter-mediality they are profoundly mixed (refashion, refunction or reforming). Both ways reflect on the identity of the role of the director.

This issue of 'media specificity' can be traced in the historical discourse developed in film theory throughout the past decades. Consequently, I will focus on this to indicate a parallelism with the theatre. Film theorist Noël Carroll has made the critical assessment that 'media specificity' is a form of 'medium-essentialism' which is the doctrine that 'each art form has its own distinctive medium, a medium that distinguishes it from other art forms' and that 'the medium qua essence dictates what is suitable to do with the medium.'[275] Therefore, a definition of theatre as a medium whose essential characteristics are liveness or a live presence means authenticity can be equally articulated. However, with the introduction of the inter-mediality these specific properties of the theatrical medium seem to collapse. Theatre becomes a paradigmatic medium in which 'the boundaries soften' and it can be identified by an 'in-between' status 'within a mixing of spaces, media and realities' already mentioned by Lehmann. Consequently, the great implication of inter-mediality in the theatre is that it intervenes into the developmental stages of the directorial action, namely a concrete operational phase of the theatre-making or process in which the director makes sense of the new environment and the media available to him or her.

[275] See Noël Carroll and Jinhee Choi, eds., *Philosophy of Film and Motion Pictures: An Anthology* (Malden, Md. and London: Blackwell, 2005), 114.

Greg Giesekam, in his turn, identifies the inter-medial theatrical production and performance as a type of multimedia technologies production where,

> more extensive interaction between the performers and various media reshapes notions of character and acting, where, neither the live material, nor the recorded/mediatized would make much sense without the other, and the interaction between the media substantially modifies how the media conventionally function and invites a deeper reflection upon their nature and methods.[276]

Giesekam with this definition has helped to identify the fundamental differences between multi-media theatre and inter-medial theatre productions. According to him, the term multi-media theatre is applied to any sort of performance event that employs film, video or computer-generated imagery alongside live performance. It includes productions, which 'occasionally use some video projection to establish settings or to imply modern parallels with the action.'[277] On the other hand an inter-medial theatrical production and performance is a production in which 'a significant amount of actors' performances appear on video, dialogue occurs between onstage and onscreen performers, and live relay to projections or video walls focuses on particular pieces of action or parts of a performers' body.'[278] Thus, a key feature of Giesekam's approach to an inter-medial theatrical production and performance is the fact that it signifies a type of production based extensively on multimedia technologies showing clearly that the on stage action depends significantly on the technological factors. However, Giesekam's critical assessment of this genre establishes that the nature of this reciprocal dependency

[276] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 8.
[277] Ibid, 8.
[278] Ibid, 8.

has fundamentally evolved: it is more extensive, interactive, substantial, modifying and deeply reflecting. The practical implication of this related to my argument is that the role of technology becomes tremendously important, profoundly significant, and renovating for the theatre and, as a result, influences the art of directing, since it is a force that mediates significant effects.

Additionally, Dixon and Smith give useful examples of the inter-medial theatrical and performance practices which underline the deeper interaction between performance and media: the combination of filmed and live choreographed movements in counterpoint to one another or in perfect synchronisation; for example, the recorded close-ups of body details such as feet and body parts moving in the exact time as the live performers or the use of live video-conferencing software that links to other performers who are performing in synchronisation elsewhere in different locations. Performers move around the stage at different speeds with handheld cameras or film projectors, directing projections around all the walls and the ceiling. Film clips are projected onto performers' white outfits and costumes or onto structures such as inflatable balloons or mini projectors beam video recorded faces onto cloth-heads. Within the screen there are numerous sliding-doors and panels at different levels, which open and close to reveal live performers engaged in various narratives and activities.[279]

Other inter-medial theatrical and performance practices occur when the short sequences of film-shots become an essential technique of dramatic narrative and

[279] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 89.

performance structure: looping, cutting, and pasting link various isochronal moments to give the impression of a web-like interlinked structure. The division into different subsequent scenes dictates a non-causally connected and a non-linear structure. The extensive use of laboratory film-processing effects, such as sudden switches to negative, from black to white, or frozen images isochronal to the stage action, are timed to coincide with live-stage transitions, for example, changes of scenes, costumes, music or choreographic tempo-rhythms. The film techniques of fade-in, fade-out, slow motion, jerky movement and a particular type of film lighting for stage in order to support the projections are also basic expressions of inter-mediality used extensively by directors.

Another important feature is that visual, lighting/sound designers, technicians, DJs, musicians etcetera are all visibly placed around the central performance-stage where the performers act or perform their tasks in real-time during the performance. As a result, the production does not attempt to disguise its mechanics, since all creators are made visible to the audience. The most important implication of this directorial practice is that the audience is in a position to share the challenges that all the co-creators - actors, directors, designers, technicians - face in working with technology and to acknowledge its role as spectators in completing the performance.[280] The witness and knowledge of the mechanics of the production, even when this contains the complex constituent element of technology, by the audience, enhances its participation in the production, something that directors apparently seek to achieve. This technique shows

[280] See for example the directorial practice of the casting of light in the audience during the performance.

how inter-medial theatrical and performance practices have led to increasingly complex interactions and convergences in order to mediate theatricality marking director's work.

Inter-mediality has denoted the director's experience of the expanded integration of all media and systems of communication (such as media and computer technology) within a theatrical performance. The mediality of hybrid, emergent practices, such as telecommunication networks and electronic visualisation techniques, in other words digital technology, created new genres such as the digital, virtual, networked and inter-medial performance. Since the 1990s this new type of art has emerged through its intersection with science, biotechnology, electrical engineering, computer simulation and nanotechnology. New media art encompassed artworks created with new media technologies, including digital art, computer graphics, computer animation, virtual art, Internet art, interactive art technologies, computer robotics, and biotechnology. Practices have been ranging from conceptual to virtual art and artworks from performance to installation. These methods and social practices of communication, representation, and expression have developed as a result of digital technology, multimedia, and networked computers.[281] Therefore, new media art had referred to the ways in which the computer as a machine, as well as the process of computerisation or digitation, is believed to have transformed the work in traditional media and, as a result, has an enormous artistic and cultural impact.[282]

[281] 'New media' definition in Martin Lister, et al., *New Media: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2009), 2.

[282] 'The computer reads electronically scanned aspects of reality [lights, darks, colours] as information about light structures, storing this numeral information [numerical data] in its database [space], which can eventually be programmed [altered, manipulated, weighted, wrapped, repositioned] to appear as visual

The computer, which is the typical agent of new art forms, has become the key tool/approach of cultural expression in the age of digital representation. According to Dixon and Smith:

> The computer does give rise to unique artistic modes of expression and new generic forms of networked and interactive performance, as an agent for the remediation of old and established artistic forms and strategies.[283]

New media have brought a revolution in a sense that they have led to innovative investigations designed to inform our understanding about the new medium - the computer - and the way people respond to it. Consequently, this type of media and technological revolution are able to determine the cultures in which they exist. Accordingly this idea of the 'newness' of computer technologies is clearest when we consider new media in the context of significant social, cultural and artistic changing-shifting.[284] From this perspective new media can be seen to generate a re-evaluation of previous media and a re-thinking of communication techniques and, therefore, as causing a technological revolution, which is still in progress informing arts by creating new art genres. The deployment of the digital culture in order to expand the world of the theatre, the themes of the play or the actor's body, has also enabled directors to develop a new stage language. The introduction of the computer in the theatre became an arena

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imagery [a simulation of a photograph or an artificial virtual reality]. Sound, image and text became digital information encompassed in a database. A new kind of representation. A new cultural form.' Margot Lovejoy, *Digital Currents: Art in the Electronic Age* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 152.

[283] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 5.

[284] According to visual arts theorist Lev Manovich the computer age 'brought with it a new cultural algorithm: reality→ media→ data→ database.' Lev Manovich, 'Database as a Genre of New Media,' accessed Mar. 20, 2007. <www.arts.ucla.edu/ AI_Society/manovich.html>.

for a new dramatic experience initiating the genre of 'digital performance' or 'inter-medial performance'.[285]

The internet became a venue for theatre, performance, game art and actor network theory and has been established on theatrical/dramatic norms and locative media such as the Global Positioning System (GPS), laptop computers and mobile phones, which started to take more active part in the performances of theatrical groups. Cameras, projectors, computer engineering/design, interactive environments, sensors, computer games and telepresence have provided new potentials for an interdisciplinary creative movement in the theatre. The relationship between the directors and the computer-generated technologies became symbiotic and mutually beneficial and the outcome was works of art with hybrid identity.

A plethora of theatre groups have incorporated in their work these practices with enormous consequences: they have changed significantly the experience of theatre-making and they have changed ultimately the nature of what is seen on stage and perceived by the audience. Some of the groups and directors established in this period are: Rimini Protokoll, Yellow Earth Theatre, Kneehigh, Blast Theory, Gob Squad, Fecund Theatre by John Keates, Imitating the Dog by Andrew Quick, Pete Brooks, The Builders Association by Marianne Weems, Synaesthetic Theatre, Gertrude Stein Repertory Theatre, IOU, Lightwork by Andy Lavender, Chameleons Group by Steve

[285] For more on digital or intermedial performance see Sarah Sloan, *Digital Fictions: Storytelling in a Waterial World* (Stamford, CT: Ablex, 2000), 44-45. Benjamin Woolley, *Virtual Worlds* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 155. Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance: A History of New Media in Theater*, 101.

Dixon, Alien Nation Co by Johannes Birringer, Desperate Optimists, La Fura del Baus, Station House Opera and a plethora of others. According to Dixon and Smith:

> We define the term digital performance broadly to include all performance works where computer technologies play a key role rather than a subsidiary one in content, techniques, aesthetics, or delivery forms. This includes live theater, dance, and performance art that incorporates projections that have been digitally created or manipulated; robotic and virtual reality performances, installations and theatrical works that use computer sensing/ activating equipment or telematic techniques; and performative works and activities that are accessed through the computer screen, including cybertheater events, MUDs, MOOs, and virtual worlds, computer games, CD-ROMs, and performative net.art works.[286]

One of the most known UK-based performance groups that practice digital performance is Blast Theory. Blast Theory was founded in 1991 by Matt Adams (director, media artist), Ju Row Farr (performer, art designer) and Nick Tandavanitj (technical designer) through a mixture of installations, digital performance and devising theatre. The group has produced mixed-reality projects blurring the boundaries between reality and virtuality (simulation), synchronous art forms (live performance) and asynchronous (galleria installations) and advanced technology (computer games, satellite receivers). The group has been interested in presenting on stage computer games' simulation encouraging interactivity and exploring ways for subverting the passive role of the audience. One of their most famous performances, the *Desert Rain* (1999-2003),[287] which was devised with the aid of the Computer Research Group of the School of Computer Science at Nottingham University, was 'one of the most complex and powerful responses to the first Gulf War to be produced within the sphere of

[286] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 3.
[287] Blast Theory and The Mixed Reality Lab at Nottingham, *Desert Rain* (1999-2003), accessed July 16, 2012. <http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/bt/work_desertrain.html>.

theatrical practice.'[288] *Desert Rain,* which was a mixture of performance, installation and virtual reality, was inspired by Jean Baudrillard's 'The Gulf War Did Not Take Place' (published in French *Libération* in 1991), in which the philosopher argues that:

> ... despite the massive aerial bombardment of Iraq's military and civil infrastructure, and despite the 100,000 estimated dead, the first Gulf War did not share any of the characteristics of previous 'conventional' wars, and so, in effect, the 'war' did not take place.[289]

Drawing on this, according to Adams, *Desert Rain* 'attempts to articulate the ways in which the real, the virtual, the fictional and the imaginary have become increasingly entwined'.[290] Giannachi also comments on this performance:

> Throughout the piece, the viewer could encounter a series of personae, environments and phenomena that were the product of both fact and fiction, and which could be seen both in the real and in the virtual environment. ... At no point did the piece therefore offer a synthesis or clarification of its structure, thus suggesting that in today's society of spectacle it is no longer possible to tell the real from the virtual.[291]

Birringer referring to the group's work *Can you see me now?* (2003-2005)[292] has sugested that it was another successful paradigm of techno-aesthetic interactive performance that involved handheld computers, satellite receivers, GPS systems, and

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[288] Gabriella Giannachi, *Virtual Theatres*, 116.
[289] Jean Baudrillard quoted in Gabriella Giannachi, *Virtual Theatres*, 116. See also Jean Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, ed. and trans. Paul Patton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).
[290] Adams and Row Farr in Maritina Leeker, ed., *Medien, Maschinen, Performances: Theater an der Schnittstelle zu digitalen Welten* (Berlin: Alexander Verlag, 2001), 744.
[291] Gabriella Giannachi, *Virtual Theatres*, 116.
[292] Blast Theory and The Mixed Reality Lab at Nottingham, *Can you see me now?* (2001-2005), accessed July 16, 2012. <http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/ bt/work_cysmn.html>.

online engagement for the user.[293] In this way Blast Theory and Adams' directing have managed to mediate how specific new technological developments can offer new possibilities of theatre-making.

As a result it seems to be the beginning of a new type of theatricality. Theatrical works have manifested how the relationship between theatre and the computer-generated technologies has become symbiotic and mutually beneficial. A synergic new potentiality for theatrical directorial development has been achieved, which has resulted in the expression of a new visual thinking for both artists/directors and audience. I will demonstrate shortly some more of the most influential representatives in order to show how the evolution of new technology exerted a powerful effect upon theatre.

Builders Association is a theatre company founded in 1993 in New York that has been famous for its digital performance practices.[294] Marianne Weems is the director of this theatre company, which has presented a type of work based on large-scale projections and interactive video installations. Centre-screen video mixes present live relayed video-image of the actors playing and live editing between pre-recorded and live video material which takes place with real-time technicians to control the spectacle. In this way Weems intends to mediate how contemporary technologies create pictorially interesting situations which are a challenge to stage.

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[293] Johannes Birringer, *Performance, Technology and Science*, 108-109.

[294] By Marianne Weems (director), John Cleater (set designer), Jennifer Tipton (lighting designer), Chris Kondek (video designer), Dan Dobson (sound designer), Ellen McCartney (costume designer), Jeff Webster (actor), David Pence (actor).

Therefore, technology is the protagonist in Builders Association's productions for two reasons: first because of the way that they use technology to say stories and second the telling of stories which thematise the psychology of the characters around technology. [295] Dixon and Smith say that Builders Association presents a 'cool, post-Brechtian and postmodern aesthetic … which reflects the contemporary culture which surrounds us.'[296] Weems's directing presents the weave of information between live and mediated forms, the staging of a conversational narrative, enhanced and undermined by an array of mixed images/sounds, the uses of theatre as a object of critical reflection and the use of technology as the most instrumentally and qualitatively appropriate for a new theatrical aesthetics.

Directors have managed to guarantee effects of immediacy-hypermediacy via technology (inter-mediality) and to provide an aesthetic experience through the mutual interplay of what appear to be distinct media, for example, the screen and the stage. The juxtaposition of screen and stage gives structures to the directing and, according to Andy Lavender, 'conveys the texture of modern experience in a phenomenal sense'.[297] In inter-mediality, the body of the onstage performer counts as a medium with the same 'rights' as the video projection. The mixture of live and mediatised material is a directing strategy that allows spectators to derive aesthetic pleasure from the recognition of the transition between the actual and the virtual, the real and the artificial, the live and the mediatised. Consequently, inter-mediality is the junction point where different

[295] Jessica Chalmers, 'A Conversation about Jet Lag' *Performance Research*, 4.2 (1999): 57-60.
[296] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 18.
[297] Chapple and Kattenbelt, eds., *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance*, 63.

media meet in theatre and which in turn triggers a dynamic response in the audience. The mastering of this junction point seems to be the main work of the director.

Rimini Protokoll is another performance group - founded by Helgard Haug (director, installation designer), Stefan Kaegi (director, dramaturg) and Daniel Wetzel (sound designer and DJ) in 2002 in Giessen (Germany) - which also practices digital performance. Their trademark has been the fact that they have repeatedly put non-professionals on stage (for example they have started their performances by putting their neighbours on stage as real people) demonstrating at the same time their expertise on particular functions (for example the everyday tasks of a real poultry farmer).[298] Their intention has been to present the performer-of-the-everyday-life-self and not the actor-self. Rimini Protokoll's tasks to performers on stage have been to operate and serve the light and sound equipment placed in full view on the stage. They carry out instructions on stage precisely, for example to switch on-off machines, change the projected pictures, switch from one piece of equipment to another, stopping a record etcetera. They have also placed the technical deficiencies at the centre of the performances in order to explicitly reveal the theatrical mechanisms.

In their performance *Prometheus in Athens* (2010) for example 100 people from Athens, who had nothing to do with the theatre appeared on stage, they posed (social-political based) questions to the audience, specialised sensors detected the raising of audience's hands (interactivity) and the results of these questions were presented

[298] Such as the appearance of the poultry farmer Hen Heller, the boulevard-diva Martha Marbo, the amateur pilot Peter Kirschen, the former mayoral candidate Sven-Joachim Otto etcetera.

directly on stage.[299] As a result, Rimini Protokoll have challenged or undermined conventional theatre practices through the use of technology. The performer-of-the-everyday-life-self (amateurs and semi-professionals) has shaken the role of professional acting. The presentation of technology's deficiencies on stage has additionally meant that the more polished and carefully built is the infrastructure of the spectacle, which is based on a technical perfection (the illusionistic nature of representational performance), the more it can be critically perceived as being mistrusted and suspicious. Additionally technology's interactivity on stage enhanced a documentary staging within the category of documentary theatre (a sub-category of the political theatre). In this way they have reflected on Brecht's demand for the separation of the selected and combined elements, the disclosure of the process of selecting and combining these elements and the audience's critical scrutiny. As a result Rimini Protokoll developed a directorial trademark through the use of technology.

Another new type of performance is the cyborg theatre, which emphasises the centrality of the body in relation to machines and technology, with representatives such as Orlan[300] and Stelarc.[301] Robotic performances include biomorphic computer-controlled robots. These are typical examples, besides digital performance, of inter-medial theatrical and performance works. The most significant issue that inter-mediality

[299] For more on this performance see Rimini Protocol, Athens and Epidaurus Festival 2010, *Prometheus in Athens*, dir. Helgard Haug and Daniel Wetzel, Athens Herodes Atticus Theatre, 15 July 2010. Programme.
[300] The French performance artist Orlan uses the surgical event as a site of performance. For Orlan see Gabriella Giannachi, *Virtual Theatres*, 49-55 and Appendix 2.
[301] Stelarc (Stelios Arcadiou a Greek Cypriot who lived in Japan and Australia) is a sculptor and performer who has used advanced technologies for his performances. For Stelarc see Appendix B.

raises, within this thesis rationale, is how each director expresses this mastering via technology. The great implication of inter-mediality in the theatre is that it intervenes into the very cognitive structure (developmental stages) of the theatrical event in a drastic way. According to Christopher Balme, 'a shift to an inter-medial perspective implies farewelling the notion that the definition of theatre as an art form is somehow linked with its specific properties as a medium'.[302]

I have already established how the use of inter-medial technologies in the theatre stands for a whole new logic of mediality: inter-mediality. The main implication was that technology not only represented a paradigmatic shift for theatrical directing, but also changed the audience's experience towards a new form of theatricality. What is important is that directors who promoted the notion of the use of technology in directing allowed a significant change in the way theatre is made and perceived through the creation of new forms of staging language and the production of hybrid theatrical effects. Consequently, inter-medial technologies represent a paradigmatic shift for theatrical directing. Therefore, the notion of inter-mediality in the theatre, as the re-creation of aesthetic conventions of one particular medium within a different medium which results in the developing of a deeper symbiosis between technology and theatre, follows the multi-mediality and enhances the notion of theatricality.

[302] Balme, 'Inter-mediality: Rethinking the Relationship between Theatre and Media', in *Crossing Media: Theater - Film - Fotografie - Neue Medien* (Munich: ePodium, 2004), 55-73. Available on line, accessed May 14, 2008. <http://www. thewis.de/ text.php4?ID= 10 & ausgabe>.

Tracing the lineage of directing in the theatrical environment through the manifestations of technology has given quantitative proof of the development of a theatrical aesthetics from the early avant-garde to the latest productions. Key theatre directors created a number of innovative technological features for the theatre that not only produced highly influential ideas on the art of directing - by revolutionising subjects of acting and dramaturgy - but also the subject of theatre technology itself. This phenomenon has been developed in such a way and degree that it has reached a level of a specific stage language and contributed significantly to the notion of director's theatre, since it has generated highly powerful dramatic effects on the spectators, and, as a result, promoted theatricality.

It has been observed in practice that the display of the characteristics of a director's theatre through applying technology, in each historical moment, concerns mainly directors that are exercising avant-garde theatre, meaning theatre artists who are pioneers and ahead of their time. Judging from theatre history, there is a clear tendency by the theatre directors, when they promote a design of a production based vitally on technology, to be consistently innovative, experimental and unconventional in their directing; the resulting performances are often considered more artistic and fantastical, and could be said to be more 'elevated culturally' than the mainstream levels of entertainment.[303] Consequently, the characteristic of the avant-garde, meaning the advanced position in the arts in my investigation of directing models with technology, is

[303] For the history of avant-garde theatre see Günter Berghaus, *Theatre, Performance, and the Historical Avant-Garde* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Ackerman and Puchner, eds., *Against Theatre* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillian, 2006).

crucial and fundamental. However, paradoxically, it can also be identified that the opposite tendency, such as in the case of West End or Broadway musical productions, in which several elements of the state-of-the-art technology can be identified, have still managed to maintain the values of the conventional commercial theatre.[304]As a result this type of theatre directing does not represent exclusively a cutting-edge or avant-garde directing. However, this finding suggests that the experimentations with technology hope to be the cannon in theatre directing. But how would one deal with the sense that some theatre directors have not been affected by technology in their methods? This seems to be basically an ideological problem, signifying two archetypical oppositional ideologies for the art of directing in the theatrical world, the one actor-centred and the other formalist. However the most significant consequence is that there is scarcely any theatre production, today, which is not using technology at all. Since the role of technology - from low to high technology -covers all the phasma of theatre directing, from experimental to mainstream productions, the criteria to evaluate the technological factor as an integral part of studying directing must be re-established.

THE BENEFITS OF MODELS OF DIRECTING WITH TECHNOLOGY

The benefits of directing with technology are: more sophisticated design of the productions, more attractive to a new generation of audience productions, wider artistic

[304] During my attendance at Yale University I met directors, production managers and technical supervisors who admitted that they had often used very avant-garde performative ideas even for the production of spectacular commercial Las Vegas shows. Conversations with Mary Hunter (Prof. of Stage Management at Yale University), Eliza Cardone (Spinnaker Production Services), John Cardone (Show Motion Productions), Geen O' Donovan (Aurora Productions). Personal notes, August 2007- December 2008.

choice and greater efficiency than would have been obtained under the condition of directing without applying technology. According to this theory of directing models, the condition of directing is maximised in conditions of extended use of the medialities of technology. The combined effect of directorial and technological efficiency leads to the fact that the dramatic effect overall is maximised. As a result, the power or the influence of the dramatic effect on the audience is also maximised.

Under the condition of directing with technology technological resources are allocated between such a variety of tools and services and in such a critical way that is not possible to constitute a directorial identity without using them; so there is an emphasis on a technological surplus on stage. The achievement of technological efficiency, which is known for the characteristics of productivity, flexibility, excellence and a mixture of scientific disciplines, is transferred to the display of the characteristics of a director's theatre. This is because the director, assuming he/she is acting creatively and has a desire to maximise his/her directorial effect, will expand synergy with technology for as long as it is creatively effective to do so. As long as the director can earn more by exploring all the possibilities of technology, will presumably do so. Only when the cost of this additional element exceeds the cost of the design of the production, will the director cease to expand the production within this terrain. Unless he/she is ideologically opposed.

Where the phenomenon of displaying the characteristics of a director's theatre through applying technology is extended, the director increases the mediality of the art

of directing itself. This means that a directorial efficiency through the technological efficiency is achieved, and audiences can obtain aesthetic pleasure by technology. Consequently, where one might expect that the use of technology might overwhelm/override the role of the director, on the contrary, the directorial role has increased through its use. A further benefit is that directors will constantly innovate and develop new productions as part of their constant battle of striving for audience awareness. Thus the display of the characteristics of a director's theatre through applying technology may have the desirable dynamic effect of stimulating important technological radical experiments. However, this assumption has been questioned. Some for instance argue that only live art can enjoy the privilege of being innovative and carry out provocative and radical experimentation. For example Peggy Phelan has proposed that being 'unmarked', can allow one to evade surveillance and control.[305] In this way the ephemerality of the performance event and the actor's quality of presence and liveness empowers liminal or marginal subjectivities (because of race, sexuality, gender, politics, ability or class) to survive in the dominant culture. However, this notion that the director has to be based exclusively on play-text/actor-performer-body centred elements in order to be radical has been abandoned long ago. Empirical radical experiments tend to suggest that neither traditionalists, nor the new generation of theatre practitioners, who boldly use technology in the theatre, have a superior track record in this respect. However, it seems that the traditionalists' assertion that only play-text or actor-performer-body centred elements are the only essential components in order to innovate in the theatrical environment, is incomplete.

[305] See Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked*, 6.

A related benefit of the display of the characteristics of a director's theatre through applying technology is that this type of directing has the dynamic effect of stimulating innovation as a new generation of practitioners strive to produce new and more sophisticated productions for new audiences. When directors promote the notion that the use of the technology's medialities would allow a change in the way that theatricality is made and perceived, distinctively they show a belief that the symbiosis between directing and technology in the theatrical environment is able to create a new form of theatrical directing/directorial language and to produce a hybrid dramatic effect based on theatrical (acting, dramaturgy, performance practice, theatrical representation) and technological agents in the direction of a theatrical aesthetics of the 'in-between'.[306] This sense stems from a technophile aesthetics or technological aestheticism profoundly associated with the postmodern culture. However, the paradox is that despite the firm ties with notions like pastiche, fragmentation and heterogeneity within the artwork - basic characteristics associated with postmodern culture - the technophile aesthetics seems to preserve a utopian desire/idealism of achieving the formation of identity through autonomy.

Additionally, the techno-bodies on stage also shift/develop a director's vision. The techno-bodies on stage (technologically mediated body through the use of camera/projectors, cyborgs with technological prostheses, cosmetic surgery performance by Orlan, for example) transform the material body on stage. The

[306] For the in-between realities see Chapple and Kattenbelt, eds., *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance*, 12 and 24.

corporeality of the actor/performer is transformed through the new visualisation techniques such as the digital into a visual medium with socio-political and cultural implications, such as in the case of techno-feminist performance.[307] Nicholas Mirzoeff calls this:

> ... a radical new way to see the body as its subject can never see it. …what matters is not the 'meat' of the body often evoked in cyber discourse but the viewing of it. The body has become (fill in as preferred) vision/performance/virtual. Or simply say, the body is becoming.[308]

Furthermore, the text also shifts from the notion of intertextuality (a literary work or image which draws upon or refers to the content of others) to the notion of hypertextuality (an audio-visual digital encoded text/data, which provides a network of links to other texts that are 'outside, above and beyond' itself).[309] In this way the notions of intertextuality, fragmentation, non-linearity and the 'death of the author'[310] - proposed by literary theorists such as Barthes, Foucault and Derrida, which have already been embodied in the theories of drama[311] such as the dramatic structures and

[307] For the technobodies/technofeminism see Amelia Jones, 'Body art. Harraway Donna The persistence of vision', in *The Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 677-684; Amelia Jones, 'Dispersed subjects and the 'diminish' of the individual: 1990s bodies in/as art', in *The Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 696-710; Anne Balsamo, 'On the cutting edge: Cosmetic surgery and the technological production of the generated body', in *The Visual Culture Reader,* ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 685-695.
[308] Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader*, 599-600.
[309] Martin Lister, et al., *New Media*, 23.
[310] The texts only make sense to us in relation to other texts that we understand them as part of the web of textuality. Thus is the reader as much the author who creates meaning.
[311] Drama as a genre of literature.

dramatic effects of Epic theatre or Postmodern theatre that shift the existing modes in playwriting - with the launching of the hypertextuality are shifted as well.[312]

QUESTIONING THE MODELS OF DIRECTING WITH TECHNOLOGY

According to Patrice Pavis *mise en scène* 'designates an aesthetic practice of expressing and enunciating the text through the stage, and in this way establishes itself at the meeting point of the interpretation of a text and its artistic realisation.'[313] Therefore, there are plenty of directing models that are based on the crucial relation of the director with the play/text indicating this as a major element and the most necessary component of the art of directing, such as in the case of the directors Peter Hall, John Burton, Lee Strasberg, Elia Kazan etcetera. This notion of 'expressing and enunciating the text through the stage' has been termed as 'theatre text', 'stage text', 'performance text' or 'scenic writing' and is the main work of the director.[314] However, the hierarchy of dramatic text/play in the production has been long ago (since the modernist era) under question.[315] The development of a director's theatre through the medialities of

[312] Hypertextuality is how the contemporary digital landscape (such as the World Wide Web, computer technology) transforms our relationship to language (saturation of documents, images and information that are linked together). See Lovejoy, *Digital Currents*, 165-166. Martin Lister, et al., *New Media*, 23-30.
[313] Patrice Pavis, *Languages of the Stage: Essays in the Semiology of the Theatre* (N.Y.: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982), 133.
[314] Ibid, 136-139. Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre*, 261; Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory* (London: Routledge, 1988), 66-111; David Bradby and Annie Sparks, *Mise En Scene: French Theatre Now* (London: Methuen Drama, 1997), 50.
[315] For more on this see Fuchs, 'Clown shows: Anti-Theatricalist Theatricalism in Four Twentieth-Century Plays' in Ackerman and Puchner, eds., *Against Theatre*, 39-57.

technology has been explicitly placed in a wider ongoing debate on the issue of shattering the hierarchy of traditional stage components.[316]

There is no doubt that directing theories related to the actor/performer's body (methods of acting and modes of performing) that have been established since the era of Stanislavsky perennially express the director's vision of theatre.[317] Dance, mime, circus and Chinese physical styles/techniques for example have contributed to the development of acting methods and to the concept of a type of directing 'not guided by meanings, but by the actor's real actions',[318] as Eugenio Barba has described it, such as the directorial work of Vsevolod Meyerhold, Jacques Copeau, Bertolt Brecht, Jean Louis Barrault, Jacques Lecoq, Ariane Mnouchkine etcetera. However, the concept of the importance of the actor's physicality has been established since the work of the director Jerzy Grotowski. Certainly Grotowski's emphasis on the expressivity of the performer's body as central places his praxis and model of directing towards the development of a more somatically-based theatre. In the *Towards a Poor Theatre* (1967) he sets out clearly that:

[316] The tradition of the dominance of the text has been seriously shattered with the movement of postmodernism and recently with the rapid emergence of the digital performance.
[317] For more on key directors who have influenced twentieth-century actors' training by developing different acting theories see Alison Hodge, *Twentieth Century Actor Training* (New York: Routledge, 2000). For a discussion on the similarities and the differences of famous schools of the American Method acting system by directors who have expanded Stanislavsky's actor training (Lee Strasberg, Stella Adler, Sanford Meisner) see David Krasner, *Method Acting Reconsidered: Theory, Practice, Future* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000). For the influences of Stanislavsky, Brecht and Grotowski in Peter Brook's actors' training see Shomit Mitter, *Systems of Rehearsal: Stanislavsky, Brecht, Grotowski, and Brook* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992).
[318] Eugenio Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy: Burning the House* (London: Routledge, 2010), 114.

> ... we [Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre] consider the personal and scenic technique of the actor at the core of theatre art' ... This emphasis on the training of the performer through psychophysical responses, and the creation of theatre that rested on the encounter between performer and spectator, rather than scenic devices, led to a new emphasis within theatre.[319]

However, as Slowiak has already spotted the cinematic fashion and the use of montage in Grotowski's directorial work is discernible, even though the dependence of his theory on film's materiality has not yet been fully explored.[320]

Eugenio Barba, in turn, who belongs in the circle of Grotowski, has stated that 'My work as a director was not guided by meanings, but by the actor's real actions and the synchronization of their relationships - their organic dramaturgy.'[321] However, in his directing theory he uses a film-based vocabulary to describe his directing process,[322] apart from the fact that he admits that he uses video equipment to monitor his actors' rehearsals, in order to refine the performance text.[323] Additionally for him sound and light - like space, costumes and objects - are generally treated as 'carriers of veiled messages'.[324] Consequently, scarcely any directors refuge using technology in their directing, especially in contemporary directing, even if this can be identified as low technology, such a in the case of the Globe theatre.

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[319] Jerzy Grotowski's *Towards a Poor Theatre* reproduced in Richard Schechner and Lisa Wolford, eds., *The Grotowki Sourcebook* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 28. See also Govan, et. al., *Making a Performance*, 159.
[320] James Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta, *Jerzy Grotowski* (London: Routledge, 2007), 14-15.
[321] Eugenio Barba, *On Directing and Dramaturgy*, 114.
[322] Barba uses extensively the word 'montage' in his directing model. Ibid, 99.
[323] Ibid, 29.
[324] Ibid, 86.

But which theatrical element has been posed historically in a higher hierarchical level for each director? Where directors have looked for the essential? What seems to be a necessity for their directing? These are of course the main issues related to form and style that remain remarkably consistent in all the eras of the director's theatre. However, I argue that further research in this field regarding the contribution of the technical/technological aspects in traditional actor/physical-based directing, not solely in terms of actual production (the use of space, sound, light, video), but also in terms of directorial logic, planning and implementation of the technological repercussions to their system of directorial thought, stage composition, and visual dramaturgy is needed. This would help in establishing a greater degree of accuracy on the misunderstood matter of the use of technology. Of course acting/performing methods were, and will be, one of the most important aspects of theatre directing especially during the phase of rehearsals. However, the debate about the stereotypical polarity of acting/performing and technology needs to be moved forward, since it is their symbiosis that determines the development and shift in theatre directing.

Directors after years of trajectory from the medialities of the acting/performance/body and the play/open text are now more than ever in the era of exploiting the medialities of technology (light, sound, video, set/space design) in relation of course to the previously established premises (acting/performance and play/text). For the directors the medialities of acting, play and technology are not contradictory premises. I argue that this phenomenon (models of directing with technology) is not on the basis of circumstantial evidence, but it has ontological aspects

related profoundly to the art of directing. I argue that the directors' use of technology clearly establishes a phenomenon which derives from inside of the theatrical organism itself (following historical and aesthetic precedents).

An explanation of this resistance to technology may be the fact that this ideology reflects a previous generation of directors, who were more interested in exploring new methods related to body-oriented actor training and issues related to the audience's active participation, rather than a solely passive observation based on anthropological theoretical approaches and influential ethnographic research. The concerns of these directors and their audiences-critics have risen because of the negative repercussions of a war era (World War II, the Holocaust, Hiroshima) and, as a result, they have developed an ideology against constitutional technology, as they consider it to be a visible manifestation of war (bombs, firearms, internet technology for military purposes, surveillance technologies etcetera) and fascism. Julian Hilton has given an explanation of these ideological prejudices:

> Theatre has rarely faced its own technological nature despite the fact that its mass appeal has rested as much on its technological as on its aesthetic genius, because it has wished to range itself on the side of civilized values in conflict with the world of enterprise and machines. [325]

Therefore, the former specific value-judgments - closely related to ideology, social or political views - may lead to the conclusion that this type of directing is inappropriate for particular genres, such as the naturalistic, radical political or classic repertory.

[325] Julian Hilton, ed., *New Directions in Theatre* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), 158.

Consequently, a further problem related to the theory of directing with technology is that there is a presumption that the fundamental role of the actor and play is pushed aside.

However, the paradigms of contemporary directors who have used technologies in their directing in a close relationship with the dramaturgy of the play and the organic dramaturgy of the actor without denying their importance have challenged the traditional hierarchies and offered an alternative scope related to the development of the role of the director. Consequently traditionalist assumptions have been questioned. The power of theatre directing will always rely on the mediality of the performer (the organic dramaturgy in Barba's terms) or on the play/storytelling (narrative dramaturgy), but it is without doubt that the radical shift in the nature of directing has derived equally from the 'dramaturgy' of technology. Between the polar of the above models, of the extensive application of technology, on the one hand, and refusing technology overall, on the other, there are many intermediate positions. Almost all directors create productions which command some degree of technology (setting, lighting and sound design). This means that, an increase in the technological design of the production will not necessarily result in a substantial use of the technological element.

One of the main objections against directing with technology has been the issue of 'dryness' of the technological media. The graphic image projections that play back from a DVD are supposed to be a 'canned' version of the piece, something that defeats

the interactive purpose of theatre and performance. In this way the technological media are characterised by 'dryness' and 'coldness'. Paul Kaiser has said on this that:

> The software looks directly at what is happening on stage and then creates its imagery in response to its understanding of what it perceives. Of course the picture it forms is idiosyncratic - in part because a given creature attends to just one kind of pattern, rather than to the aggregate of patterns that we in the audience are following. But because it attends so closely to that pattern, it often reveals relationships that we don't notice. [326]

Another objection can be traced to the historicity of the argument that technology in the theatre lacks authenticity and leads to the deprivation of liveness. The theoretical debate stems from Walter Benjamin's notion of 'aura' and Philip Auslander's notion of 'liveness'. Both coincide with the fact that something which is precious and important for the human experience vanishes via the 'recorded' and nothing can make up for the loss. Walter Benjamin mentions the 'aura' which relates to the actual physical relationship of the perceiver and the art object. Benjamin supports that the authenticity of a work of art is the essence of all. Auslander makes a distinction between the authentic and inauthentic as well. Being able to say that you were physically present at an event constitutes a valuable symbolic 'property'. For him the 'recorded', which is characterised by the absence of the 'live', is a secondary, artificial reproduction of the real. Even though he declares that live performance is in an antagonistic, confliction, and in a competitive relationship to mediatisation, referring to the present mediatised environment (television, film, sound recording, computer), he asserts that there is a dialectical symbiotic relationship and a mutual dependence between live performance

[326] Johannes Birringer, *Performance, Technology and Science*, 266.

and mediatised representations. Thus, Auslander is convinced that the series of technical innovations, cinematic techniques, and other modes of multi-mediality have brought greater flexibility on stage. The causes and consequences of the dominance of the mediality of technology in the theatre directing are historically, socio-politically and culturally derived.

Additionally, the example of a traditionalist audience and traditionalist criticism that rejects theatrical directing with technology and which tends towards a dislike or even loathing of the manifestations of lavish extravaganzas, based on advanced technology or expensive high-tech equipment and devices, can be read as a challenge to the director's self-indulgence. This is a consequence of an overconsumption of the dominant position of technology in the cultural and social environment and, subsequently, in the theatrical environment. It is without doubt that the use of technology has become a fashion or a fetish or a cliché by a wide range of directors in a great deal of productions. Consequently, a lot of directors seem to have become addicted to a directorial behaviour linked to the use of technology to a self consuming degree. The stimulation offered to the audience by technology sometimes falls hollow and lacks dramatic function. Directors become habituated to technology in order to achieve novelty and regulate the audience's ability to feel pleasure. But, some directors by rushing to provide pleasurable stimulating experience for the audience often use technology that lacks effective dramaturgical function and becomes only a superficially decorative element, causing a feeling of discontent for the audience.

Other problems raised by the theory of directing with technology depend on the notion that all directors always attempt to maximise directorial effects, so when they do not manage to do it, the culprit is basically technology. But this is not necessarily the case. Directors may not think that creating large effects for their audience is the most important consideration they have to face: they maybe more interested in exploring the mechanisms of technology in theatre directing for the benefit of the play or acting itself. In short they use specific new technological developments as a mode of enquiry into performance. So their experimentations with the new media, for example, sometimes might not appeal to a mainstream audience, but to specialists or audiences with the same concerns. The theory of a director's theatre which is inextricably dependant on technology is affected by the formation of the audiences. Historically, the entire directorial system has evolved from the ingenuity, creativeness and the self-generating imperative of survival in the theatrical market. Those directors who are more able to detect audiences' beat and quickly process novelty in their directing are more likely to survive and either pass on their art to the next generation of directors in a form of theatrical Darwinism or ensure that their legacy remains.

As more affordable technological developments expand, the costs of using technology increasingly and drastically will reach a minimal level. In the long run this tendency of directors to use technology will incur the lowest cost possible and, at the same time, achieve the maximum dramatic effect for an audience's immersion and engagement in the performance. Eventually equilibrium will be reached where the design of the production by the director and the average cost of producing using

technology will necessarily coincide. This in turn means that the design of the production would never rise above cost or the costs of use of technology in the theatre will be kept at a minimal level. If, on the other hand, the design of the production is continuously going to fall below cost, then rationally there would be a rejection of this genre from the theatrical art and the effect of models of directing with technology would therefore decrease and the design of the production by the directors would be restored to earlier forms.

Finally, another objection against technology in the theatre has focused on the issue of reliability. The extreme riskiness of the endeavour that involves a huge technical effort which sometimes is unlikely to be repeated can function as an impediment. Technology creates high expectations in the audience. However when these expectations are not fulfilled this can be frustrating. For example the director Robert Lepage cancelled the premier of *Elsinore* (1995) at the Edinburgh Festival because of technical problems.[327] Katie Mitchell also has admitted that several times the performance has stopped because of a number of technical problems.[328] Consequently, in their work, the technological elements seem to show a paradox or contradiction. On one hand, technological elements are concrete devices with strong instrumentalisation character (devices are governed by a firm instrumental rationality) and, on the other, they are unpredictable and fragile. However, the more sophisticated the relationship

[327] 'This is the show [*Elsinore*] that was supposed to open the official festival at Edinburgh and had to be cancelled for want of a rivet.' Jane Edwardes, *Time Out* (Jan 1, 1997), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 17: 1/2 (1-28 Jan, 1997), 12. See also Charles Spencer, 'Elsinore,' *Daily Telegraph* (Sept. 23, 1996), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 16: 19 (Sept. 9-22, 1996), 1192.

[328] Katie Mitchell has also mentioned technical difficulties in her interview at Young Vic, London (16 April 2009) related to the production *After Dido* (2009).

between technology and directing the more ongoing ever-changing becomes their mutual exchange on stage. This character of unpredictability, fragility and ever-changeability might also suggest why technology is so attractive for directors such as LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell. Lastly, the main difficulty with the formation of a theory of directing with technology is the fact that it is based on a utopian static model of interpretation of the directorial behaviour. As a result years may pass before its crystallisation and institutionalisation. Since the vocabulary of this has not yet become well-defined or fixed it may sometimes seems that it fails to account for the dynamic nature of directing. Therefore, this paradigm must always be bound to the demonstration of particular practices-paradigms.

As I discuss in Chapter Two, Chapter Three and Chapter Four the three directors, LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell, had very different working environments. The creative working environment of Elizabeth LeCompte basically included performers who were able to expose their autobiographical references and personal experiences expanding in this way the notion of intertextuality through the re-workings of classic dramas towards an aesthetic of deconstruction. She also involved creative collaborators (sound-video designers) who were interested in analysing the everyday workings of pop visual culture and the role of media, all within a postmodern framework. Lepage's creative working environment is associated with performers trained in improvisation techniques, object theatre and situational emotions, in terms of acting style. The notion of continuously evolving performances or cycles is demonstrated by his incorporation of audience responses in his performances. He also supported the development of a

multidisciplinary creative team that enhanced his stage narration and was based significantly on multimedial visual imagery. Katie Mitchell's working environment took a different course and includes performers trained in the Stanislavskian acting method, using meticulous details and expressional precision in order to represent the classics through the workings of mediatisation. Her designers recreated a chilly, gloomy, claustrophobic atmosphere with social-political references through modern costume. She created a complex multimedial performance space, post-modernising in this way the traditional, illusionistic style of representation. The work of the three directors is clearly radical but each is finely interconnected with a range of historical influences and personal working contexts as I will discuss in the following chapters.

CONCLUSION

Since this thesis identifies and accounts for the relationship between the use of technology and theatre directing, in this section I have unveiled the resonance of writing a microcosmic-macrocosmic theatre theory on directing and technology by using a theorem and the theories of mediality, multi-mediality and inter-mediality as decisive aspects for showing how the element of technology in the theatre can be perceived as a kernel for the development of the directorial role. I have articulated the terms of my analysis in relation to the formulation of a directing theory. I have attempted to examine these theories with evidence from theatre directors who use technology in the theatre and shown the way that the practice has challenged conventional theatrical technique and has contributed to the shift in development of the directorial identity.

The findings of the above theories in this part of the thesis have been: firstly, the theoretical arguments espoused around these theories (macrocosmos) provided the critical tools for an identification of the specific directing models with technology (microcosmos) and fundamentally bring all these together. Specifically, in my attempt to formulate directing models or forms of 'directorial externalities', such as the models of directing with technology or else displaying the characteristics of director's theatre through different modes of applying technology, the manifestations of mediality, multi-mediality and inter-mediality indeed have proved to be an effective method for contesting a change or shift development in the role of the director, which is the main argument of this thesis. Consequently, this developmental nexus (series of connections, linking and trajectory) from mediality to multi-mediality and inter-mediality in the trajectory of the work of theatre directors in close relation with their ideology and aesthetics have enabled the significance of this type of directing, or else the models of directing with technology to be more fully apprehended through a theoretical perspective.

The most important and interesting findings are that: the mediality of technology in the theatrical environment has evolved together with a director's theatre as an integral part of the notion of theatricality. After a phase of exploring the medial communications of technology, directors presented a shift in their directorial identity by enhancing the mediality of multimedia technologies in the theatre, namely multi-mediality. Directors succeeded in this by multiplying possible interactions (synergy or anti-synergy)

between technology and theatre. Consequently, directing with technology obtained a distinct theatrical identity and exerted a dramatic effect and theatricality, standing for a whole new logic of mediality in the theatre. The role of the director changed again by extending the concept of the integration, mutual exchange and amalgamation of theatre and technology, namely inter-mediality. The great implication of this was the fact that technology intervened into the very cognitive structure of the theatrical event (the properties of the theatrical medium and its perception by the spectator) in a more drastic way. Consequently, the mastering of the interplay between technology and theatre became the main work of the director, marking the change in the latter's directorial identity. Conclusively, the trajectory from mediality to multi-mediality and inter-mediality in the director's work can be perceived as the major premise for identifying a change and a shift in their directorial role in the theatrical environment.

In this discussion the use of these terms have aimed to provide an umbrella theory of a cause and effect development under which lies a broad-spectrum theory (macrocosmic aspect) of the relationship between technology and directing, therefore, these terms have been used in their broadest and most neutral connotation as a general theoretical explanatory framework.[329] As a result, their detailed historicity and contextualisation exclusively within the field of media theory have not been addressed, since I have used them as an umbrella theory for formulating a theatre theory. These theories have been considered as the main theoretical influence upon the writing of my

[329] By not limiting the notion of multi-mediality and inter-mediality to theories of media, but to a broader understanding of the use of technology in the theatre, I am asserting that these notions can indeed be an effective umbrella theory produced by the nexus of technology and directing itself, and/or by certain characteristics of the directing presented on the stage.

argument and significantly influence the conclusions of this thesis. I will now demonstrate how the above theatre theory presents a concrete articulation of the development of the directorial identity of the directors LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell, which are my case studies. Therefore, strong evidence of a clear development of their directing has been found when this theatre theory is applied to these three directing models, which can be defined by one key element: the use of the medialities of technology.

CHAPTER TWO: ELIZABETH LECOMPTE AND FRAGMENTARY TECHNOLOGY

This chapter is an investigation of the role of technology in the developmental identity of theatre director Elizabeth LeCompte. The main aim is to illustrate how LeCompte's directing with technology gave rise to a model of directing which I have termed 'fragmentary technology', and how this model contributed to a change in her role as a director. An explanation of this term will be fully discussed later. I will argue that the more LeCompte embraced technology as a director-creator, the more her role changed. In order to effect this change, there must have been continuous applications or medialities of technology as a directorial strategy. In this chapter I propose ways of interpreting LeCompte's model of fragmentary technology in order to understand how the medialities of technology affected the way that her theatre directing was carried out and perceived indicating how the symbiotic character of theatrical and technological means produced dramatic effects and theatricality.

I will briefly introduce LeCompte's background, ideology and aesthetics and then focus on the production that prepared the ground for the shift in her directing *Brace Up!* (1991, 2003). I will identify three basic characteristics of her fragmentary technology model: the interaction between the technicians and the performers, the borrowing of multimedia and new media techniques for structuring the stage action and the development of a techno-acting that created a cyborg theatre. My case study is a close reading of the performance *Hamlet* (2006, 2007) and focuses on specific scenes that

illustrate my central points. After that I will link LeCompte's directorial trajectory with the theories of mediality, multi-mediality, inter-mediality, and theatricality which is based on the aesthetics of a post-Brechtian theatre of estrangement. The findings will justify my hypothesis that LeCompte has created a conceptual directorial model through her use of technology, but also that a significant change in her own role as a director has taken place through the medialities of technology.

My viewing strategy meant that I travelled to New York, where LeCompte and the Wooster Group are based, in order to watch *Hamlet*. The performance created an exciting and testing viewing experience for me as an audience member since I witnessed for the first time the complicated work of the Wooster Group and its director in live performance. Observational data also included audiovisual material of the past productions of the Wooster Group.

BACKGROUND, IDEOLOGY, AESTHETICS

LeCompte and her theatre company the Wooster Group emerged from the theatrical environment of Richard Schechner's Performance Group in 1975, in New York.[330] Later, LeCompte abandoned Richard Schechner's environmental ritualistic

[330] Members of the Wooster Group, who have prepared performances in the Performance Garage on Wooster Street in New York's SoHo district, included Jim Clayburgh (designer), John Collins (sound designer), Christopher Kondek and Ken Kobland (video designers) Jennifer Tipton (lighting designer) and the actors Willem Dafoe, Kate Valk, Spaulding Gray, Payton Smith, Ron Vawter and many more. For a further information on LeCompte's collaborators see Johan Callens, 'Introduction: Of Rough Cuts, Voice Masks, and Fugacious Bodies,' in *The Wooster Group and its Traditions*, ed. Johan Callens (Brussels: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2004), 45.

theatre, which was intended to enhance communication between the audience and performers, and took it one step further, creating an obvious separation between performers and audience; this she achieved by shedding a light on something that was going to be her directorial trademark: the deconstruction of the actor's presence. However, David Savran remarks that LeCompte preserved and developed one of Schechner's basic notions in her directing: the performance as 'restored behaviour or twice-behaved behaviour'.[331] A 'restored behaviour' refers to physical or verbal actions that are not rehearsed by the performers. The physical or mental actions belong to a broader social and cultural context, are engaged by the interpreter-performer in the process of reconstruction, and the creative process used during the rehearsals. This process of reconstruction of behaviour via rehearsals is independent of its cause meaning that the interpreter-performer strips these behaviours of their origins or their original functions within personal, social, political, and technological contexts.

During the early years of the Wooster Group, the foundations of LeCompte's practices were established and distinctive characteristics emerged with productions such as *Sakonnet Point* (1975), *Rumstick Road* (1977), *Nayatt School* (1978), and *Point Judith* (1979).[332] The Wooster Group's performances were, above all, collage performance pieces with nonlinear narratives. In LeCompte's work, straightforward narrative was absent and she relied on the expression of abstract and conceptual modes of representation using the 'restored behaviour' technique. However, the most

[331] David Savran, 'The Death of the Avantgarde', *The Drama Review* 49.3 (Fall 2005): 15.
[332] See analysis of the plays in James Bierman, 'Three Places in Rhode Island' *Drama Review* 23. 1 (Mar. 1979): 13-30 and Spaulding Gray, 'About Three Places in Rhode Island' *Drama Review* 23. 1 (Mar. 1979): 31-42.

significant element in LeCompte's work, during this period, was the high rate of self-reference. Self-reference elements, such as the recycling of scenery, props and costumes from earlier pieces which functioned as signs of the group's history or autobiographical references of performers' personal experiences gradually forged the Wooster Group's identity.[333]

The postmodern theatre of the 1980s was related to avant-garde and modernist theatre and the major cultural expressions of the twentieth century.[334] Issues such as rupture and discontinuity with the past were greater than before. This historical conflict was powerfully expressed through an iconoclastic attack on any institutional theatrical practice. Furthermore, the validation of pop culture as a challenge to the theatrical canon gradually led to a neo-conservatism in which media criticism grew swiftly. It was in this climate that LeCompte started to build her directorial identity.

LeCompte's background was in the visual arts: she graduated from Skidmore College with a degree in visual arts and this was often noticeable in her directing

[333] Examples include: the life story and the memoirs of the performer Spaulding Gray, who had for example illegally taped a conversation with a psychiatrist talking about his mother's suicide and presented it in *Rumstick Road* (1977); experiences of the actors, such as rehearsing the play *The Crucible* after having taken the hallucinogenic drug LSD in *L.S.D. (...Just the High Points...)* (1984); the portrayal of the actors visiting the Laboratory Theatre founded by the Polish theatre director and innovator of experimental theatre Jerzy Grotowski in the performance *Poor Theater. A Series of Simulacra* (2003), etcetera. For more on this practice see Jon Erickson, 'Appropriation and Transgression in contemporary American Performance' *Theatre Journal* 42.1 (Mar. 1990): 234.

[334] I have referred to the avant-garde, modernism and postmodernism related to the history of theatre practice and technology in the Chapter One.

through her use of motifs from paintings.[335] During the 1980s, productions such as *Route 1 & 9* (1981), *L.S.D (Let's Say Deconstruction)…Just The High Points* (1984), *North Atlantic* (1984), and *Frank Dell's Temptation of Saint Antony* (1987) became highly intertextual and made reference not only to popular visual culture, but also to popular drama and literature. Roland Barthes defines 'intertextuality' as:

> … a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture.[336]

LeCompte demonstrated this intertextuality in her directing when she juxtaposed one text to another text, or one form-medium to another form-medium: for example, she used multimedia-forms in order to discover similarities, differences and broader interrelations between different text-forms. LeCompte's directing also served as an 'inter-text' for a subsequent production, since elements of her former directing could be traced in a subsequent production through her use of self-reference. In this way, each of LeCompte's performances could be understood not as an independent structure, but as the repetition and reproduction of former textual or visual structures presented in her previous productions. LeCompte made powerful stage images through this strategy of visual intertextualisation, in combination with a blend of different standard theatrical forms such as Schechner's environmental theatre, Japanese Noh, and musical theatre. She used Japanese film, porn movies, Polynesian dances, and cartoons, and employed

[335] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 81. See also Pearlman and Gray, 'Spaulding Gray on Zen and the Downtown Theater Scene,' *Brookline Rail* (Oct. - Nov. 2001), accessed May 20, 2009. <http://www.brooklynrail.org/2001/10/theater/spaulding-gray-on-zen-and-the-downtown-theater-scene>.
[336] Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in *Image/Music/Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 146.

different types of acting: Brechtian, soap opera, chat-show representations, or just simple reading from the text. Working in the context of the postmodern theatre of the 1980s, she adopted an ideological stance that promoted an aestheticised form of the notion of intertextuality, in Barthes's terms, on stage.

LeCompte took intertextuality even further by shifting traditional theatrical notions, such as theatre within theatre, or performance within the performance which were effectively explored through the incorporation of different media technologies, similar to Barthes' 'innumerable centres of culture'. This resulted in a collage of texts, narratives and images, as well as a mixture of different media and elements which belonged to different cultural heritages, public debates, pre-digested pop culture imagery and historical documentation which functioned as 'a tissue of quotations' that 'blend and clash' provoking radical theatrical criticism.[337] Auslander describes the Wooster Group as 'a theatre with a politic' within a postmodern framework, rather than a 'political theatre' in the narrow sense of the term.[338]

[337] For example, in *L.S.D. (...Just the High Points...)* (1984), the 'raw material' ranged from excerpts from books by the Beat Generation writers, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953) to the Harvard psychologist Timothy Leary's album *L.S.D.* (1966); *Brace Up!* (1991) had drawn from Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters* (first published in 1900); and *To You, The Birdie!* (2001) from Jean Racine's *Phèdre* (first performed in 1677).

[338] Phillip Auslander, 'Toward a Concept of the Political in Postmodern Theatre' *Theatre Journal* 39.1 (Mar. 1987): 33. Therefore, LeCompte's work belonged to the model of political theatre and proves that by using experimental theatre based on deconstructive modality it is possible to convey a meaningful political aspect.

There were a number of other significant influences on LeCompte's aesthetic strategies that paved the way for her directorial trademark. For example, she employed an approach using video art in order to expand the world of the play, and create a reality composed by visual language.[339] As Greg Giesekam has commented, the work of Piscator and Svoboda[340] could be seen as LeCompte's ideological ancestors as far as the idea of using the screen on stage is concerned.[341] Other influences on LeCompte's aesthetics have been identified in the legacy of the American avant garde, such as the work of the musician John Cage, the choreographer Merce Cunningham, and the costume designer Robert Rauschenberg.[342] The mixed media works of the 1950s, the legacy of the Happening, Fluxus, and Performance Art groups of the 1960s in New York, Robert Wilson and Richard Foreman's 'theatre of images',[343] and John Jesurun's 'media theatre' of the 1980's have also influenced LeCompte's directing.[344]

[339] Video Art is 'a form of moving-image art that garnered many practitioners in the 1960s and 1970s with the widespread availability of inexpensive videotape recorders and the ease of its display through commercial television monitors.' 'Video Art.' *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed July 16, 2012. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/678479/video-art>.

[340] The Czech stage-designer and architect Josef Svoboda (1920-2002) combined science, technology and design in his productions permitting performers to interact with film imagery. For more on the set design of Svoboda see Jarka, Burian, *The Scenography of Josef Svoboda* (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1971); J. M, Burian, and Josef Svoboda, *The Secret of Theatrical Space: The Memoirs of Josef Svoboda* (Tonbridge: Applause, 1992). See also Appendix B.

[341] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 88.

[342] For the collaboration between Cage (music), Cunningham (choreography)and Raushenberg (set and costume designer), and the legendary Black Mountain College's experimental performances (in Asheville (N.C), summer 1952) see RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* (New York: Thomas and Hudson, 2001), 126-127.

[343] Marranca, Bonnie, *Richard Foreman, Robert Wilson, and Lee Breuer: Theatre of Images* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), passim.

[344] For more on John Jesurun and his cinematic theatre see Ronald K. Fried, 'The Cinematic Theatre of John Jesurun,' *Drama Review* 29. 1 (Spring, 1985): 57-72; Craig, Gholson, and John Jesurun, 'John Jesurun,' *BOMB* 11 (Winter, 1985): 90-91; Bonnie Marranca, 'Performance as Design: The Mediaturgy of John Jesurun's Firefall,' *Performing Arts Journal* 32. 3 (Sept. 2010): 16-24.

LeCompte criticised cultural theatrical traditions referring to the cult of the 'geniuses' of dramatic theatre that have emerged as unquestionable mythologised paeans of theatre-making, such as, for example, the Grotowskian mythology, the Dada mythology, or the avant-garde mythology;[345] in short, she was concerned with mythologies that are mainly related to avant-garde theatre and the traditions of modernism and postmodernism intending to de-mythologise theatrical history. For example, Stephen Bottoms in his analysis of her performance *Poor Theater* (2003) says that:

> Part one of *Poor Theater*, as the title suggests, takes on the legend of Jerzy Grotowski's groundbreaking directorial work of the 1960s, by using surviving film documentation of the Polish Laboratory Theatre's production of *Akropolis* (1962) as the script for a meticulous restaging, in the original Polish, of that piece's closing section. 'Our Akropolis' is followed, after a short interval, by part two, in which a very different spin is put on the idea of 'poor theater', as the Group reproduce a lecture demonstration by the American-born, German based choreographer William Forsythe, whose Ballet Frankfurt - founded by Forsythe in 1984.[346]

An explanation of this 'meticulous restaging' has been given by Jon Erickson through the notions of 'appropriation and transgression'. The term appropriation recognises an ideological status which was never questioned in its original use, while transgression is the passing beyond the bounds of legality or right strategy.[347] According to Erickson, every appropriative or transgressive act is less a true subversion of

[345] *Poor Theater. A Series of Simulacra.* Dir. Elizabeth LeCompte. The Wooster Group. The Performance Garage, 19 November - 19 December 2003, performance; *Who is your DADA?* Dir. Elizabeth LeCompte. The Wooster Group. Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), 6-9 September 2006, performance.
[346] Stephen Bottoms, 'Poor Theater: A Series Of Simulacra', *Theatre Journal* 56. 4 (Dec. 2004): 693. For more on the work of Forsythe see 'William Forsythe,' The Forsythe Company Site, accessed July 10, 2012. <http://www.theforsythecompany.com/ details.html?&L=1>.
[347] Jon Erickson, 'Appropriation and Transgression in Contemporary American Performance', 226.

hegemonic ideology, in the name of another ideal, than it is a challenge to that ideology to increase the scope of its power over such divergent ideals and their representations. Erickson adds: 'This paradox is something that theatre has always had to face in its attempt to provide a critical consciousness against reigning ideologies.'[348] In LeCompte's directing appropriation and transgression function in this way.

LeCompte's directing also became firmly located in the framework of postmodern polysemic production.[349] Theatre which is polysemic is noteable as Aston and Savona have put it, 'for its ability to draw on a number of sign systems which do not operate in a linear mode but in a complex and simultaneously operating network unfolding in time and space'.[350] And it becomes the principle means by which directors transmit messages. These networks of messages shift constantly as a result of the different theatrical devices that can be used to create the same sign and vary according to the type of theatre. This postmodern polysemic mode additionally functions within the framework of 'appropriation and transgression'.

LeCompte was heavily influenced by the deconstructions of American classical drama *(Long Day's Journey into Night* by Eugene O' Neill in Wooster Group's *Point Judith* (1980), *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder in Wooster Group's *Route 1 and 9 (The Last Act)* (1981), *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller in Wooster Group's *L.S.D. (...Just The*

[348] Ibid, 236.
[349] Phillip Auslander, *From Acting to Performance: Essays in Modernism and Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1997), 64-72.
[350] Elain Aston and George Savona, *Theatre as Sign System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), 99.

High Points) (1984), etcetera) interrogating, in a political way, classic realist plays that were traditionally thought of as conforming to an ideal dramaturgical norm and American national identity.[351] Although her structure followed the narrative spine of classical plays, the integration of personal material based on the personalities of the performers transformed the imaginary material and shifted the boundaries between fiction and reality highlighting the fact that both have emerged and been shaped within a specific postmodern cultural framework (meta-theatre).[352] LeCompte's directing relied significantly on the avant-garde's aesthetic strategies, since they tended to preserve the canon and at the same time to subvert it reflecting on Erickson's 'appropriation and transgression' theory.[353]

Gradually, LeCompte's directing style became characterised by scholarship as 'the ultimate in deconstructive theatre'.[354] Savran specifically describes it as 'a visual collage of found objects and fragments that form a network, whose structure is firm, but whose meaning is unstable and arbitrary.'[355] The dynamics of LeCompte's pictorial composition aimed at an emancipatory stage narrative, freeing spectators and performers from restrictions and conventions, or as Savran has suggested, LeCompte,

[351] Ric Knowles, 'The Wooster Group: House/Lights, Landscapes and The Politics of Nostalgia', *Essays in Theatre/ Études Théâtrales* 19.1 (Nov. 2000): 33.
[352] Of prime importance in understanding the principles of LeCompte with Wooster Group's work is the notion of structuring the performance around the personalities of the performers, their relationship with their play's characters/personae and their confrontations with the texts, as well as the act of performing under specific circumstances.
[353] 'LeCompte chose these texts for this reason, to examine ideological presuppositions but not to ridicule.' Jon Erickson, 'Appropriation and Transgression in Contemporary American Performance', 232.
[354] Branislav Jakovljevic, 'South Pacific-North Atlantic. From Total War to Total Peace', *Theater* 31.1 (Winter 2001): 46.
[355] Ibid: 46.

with the Wooster Group, 'had broken the rules'.[356] This way of working generated a very distinct directorial model which was characterised by a shift from the deconstruction of dramas to the deconstruction of the presence and, unavoidably, started systematically to explore the potential of technology to frame, fragment and multiply the body on stage, in a form of disembodiment.

The basis for a theoretical and historical contextualising of this practice points to Bertolt Brecht.[357] Brecht's theory and practice regarding the need to maintain a distance between actor and character is exemplary of a pre-conception of the 'deconstruction of the presence' and of the destruction of the 'authority of presence' (actor's persona) in order for the commentary to carry more weight. The influence of this idea of referencing and reflecting on an actor's subjectivities to develop directing was further developed through the idea of surrogation. The Wooster Group's performances in terms of the acting trajectory, started to represent what Joseph Roach has referred to as 'acts of surrogation'.[358] In Roach's concept of surrogation, actors do not embody characters according only to their subjectivity, but are haunted by the performance of former actors, point to their absence and use them as references. Savran states that:

[356] For a fuller description on Wooster Group's methods see David Savran, *The Wooster Group, 1975-1985. Breaking the Rules* (Ann Arbor: UMI Reserch Press, 1986).
[357] For the connection between deconstruction and Brecht see Janelle Reinelt, 'Rethinking Brecht: Deconstruction, Feminism, and the Politics of Form' *Essays on Brecht/the Brecht Yearbook* 15 (1990): 99-107. For the workings of the alienation effect in the work of other artists (Pina Bausch and Heiner Müller) in a postmodern context see Elizabeth Wrigth, *Postmodern Brecht: A Re- Presentation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989).
[358] David Savran, 'The Death of the Avantgarde', 15.

> ... the Wooster Group performer vigorously goes through the motions, taking on a role (as one might do on a mask) while signalling the impossibility of impersonation.[359]

Therefore, the 'act of surrogation' or the idea of going 'through the motions' points to a type of acting defined by the 'impossibility of impersonation' or else by the 'deconstruction of the presence'.

This is a fundamental concept if we want to comprehend LeCompte's aesthetics and understand the use of technology. For example, the concept of surrogation is magnified through the juxtaposition of the live and the recorded mediated by technology, which elicits a dynamism affecting the spectators on a conceptual and sensual level because of its capacity to deviate from the traditional forms of stage acting. As a result, the deconstruction of the presence helped to demystify acting. The actors are conscious that they act, with the knowledge that they are being observed, or that simultaneously they observe other actors acting. Some express the emotions they portray through gesture and artificial facial expression, for example, Willem Dafoe placed glycerine in his eyes to simulate tears in *L.S.D. ... (Just The High Points)* (1984). Another practice was when the performer reads from a book at breakneck speed distorting the text, rather than playing the character, or when the performer gives an interpretation of the rehearsal of their character. Performers read the words of others, or they repeat words from tape recordings, or reproduce vocal tones and inflections. Such practices created an acting style called the 'deconstruction of presence', which can be

[359] Ibid, 15.

summarised as the recreation of clichéd styles of acting. This became a sign of the mediated self, dispersing the conventional concept of the authentic self in realistic mimetic representation. Worthen has commented on the above method:

> The live cast members are hemmed in by their roles as replicants. Since their first duty is to present only the shells of the performances they are imitating, they are only rarely able to fill those exteriors with a transforming interpretive force.[360]

The notion of the deconstruction of presence has led to the seminal integration of media into the performance through mediatisation and 'replicants', for example, when the live performer's body is represented as a mediated body. It is visually enhanced by the exposure of the artificiality of technology in the theatre compared to acting techniques and becomes theatrically striking. Actors who read a text sitting on a table under outsized light bulbs, or presented their bodies distorted by prosthetics or their simultaneous imaging on the screen were some of the most effective ways which served as distancing mechanisms in LeCompte's directing.[361]

In the context of history, ideology and aesthetics, it is important to provide an overview of some key terminology in relation to the production of an aesthetics that has remained remarkably consistent in LeCompte's directorial work: this is the aesthetics of the negation. The aesthetics of negation referred mainly to LeCompte's aestheticised

[360] W. B. Worthen, 'Hamlet at Ground Zero: The Wooster Group and the Archive of Performance' *Shakespeare Quarterly* 59.3 (Fall 2008): 314.
[361] For the use of prosthetics see Ric Knowles, 'The Wooster Group: House/Lights, Landscapes and The Politics of Nostalgia', 34.

revolutionary attack on cultural artefacts, making a clear link with the historical avant-garde. David Savran acknowledged that:

> ... the Group's work certainly embodies those characteristics that Peter Burger famously identifies with the historical avant-garde: revolt against the purported autonomy of the aesthetic, desacralization of art, delight in provoking shock, criticism of theatre as an institution, undoing of the opposition between producer and spectator, radical negation of the ... individual creation.[362]

This aestheticised attack was aimed at subverting predetermined received meanings and at rethinking certain fixed modes of representation or else de-mythologise theatre history. However, this type of directing denied the audience the option of a revelation, since there was no sense of intimacy, familiarity or comfort or, as Bonnie Marranca states there was 'no hint of what may occur from one moment to the next'.[363] In theatre theory, it can be found in developmental characteristics of the Brechtian 'estrangement effect' (Verfremdungseffekt). The lack of intimacy, familiarity or comfort promoted critical thought in the same way that Brecht had envisioned the effects of the estrangement. LeCompte's exposure of the mechanics of the production as an aesthetic of negation to traditional theatrical modes of representation created tension between the condition of 'being something known' with, intimacy, familiarity, comfort, gender, nationality, religion, ethnicity, and 'not being known' with a feeling of estrangement through performing against 'the known'. In this section I have historised and contextualised LeCompte's practice in order to identify continuities in her directing, point out influences and describe what has made her most famous. Specifically, I have

[362] David Savran, 'Obeying the Rules' in *The Wooster Group and its Traditions*, ed. Johan Callens, 65.
[363] Bonnie Marranca, 'The Wooster Group: A Dictionary of Ideas', *Performing Arts Journal* 74 (2003): 17.

demonstrated her directorial development within the Wooster Group, and I have offered a brief comment as to why an understanding of this experience is important in order to interpret in her work. This introduction will help me to identify the shift of her directorial role via the medialities of technology.

PERFORMANCE THAT PREPARED THE GROUND FOR THE TURNING POINT

In this section I will demonstrate how LeCompte, in her directing of the play *Brace Up!* (1991) used multimedia technology and how this demonstrates a shift in her directorial style. This will help me to draw conclusions related to her developmental model of directing with technology under the influence of a multi-mediality phase. *Brace Up!* opened on the 18 January 1991 at the Performance Garage in New York, toured in the US and Europe and was produced again 12 years later in 2003.[364] The reviewer J. McMillan said that *Brace Up!* had managed to open up 'the full subtlety, pathos and irony of Chekhov's drama, analysing its elements, demonstrating how they could still work through and alongside the barrage of fragmented images that make up modern cultural experience.[365] *Brace Up!* was a performance that celebrated the directing style for which LeCompte had become famous: emphasis on the process and the creation of a nonlinear structure/narrative, which provided alienated (producer, production) and alienating (spectator, spectatorship) effects. She employed diverse

[364] *Brace Up! Anton Chekhov's Three Sisters*. Dir. Elizabeth LeCompte. The Wooster Group. The Performance Garage, 18 January 9 March 1991 and St. Anne's Warehouse, 19 February - April 2003. Performance. For a detailed description of this performance and interviews see also Andrew Quick, *The Wooster Group Work Book* (London: Routledge, 2007), 281.
[365] McMillan, *Guardian* Nov. 4, 1992, qtd. in Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 98.

styles of performing, stressed the use of multimedia technology, and the recycling of scenery, props, and costumes from earlier pieces.[366] In this production, LeCompte continued her dispute with the validation of traditional forms of theatrical representation and postmodern modes in contemporary theatre.

Brace Up! was an adaptation of the classic drama *The Three Sisters* written by Anton Pavlovitch Chekhov in 1900, and first produced by the great realist director Konstantin Stanislavsky in the famous Moscow Art Theatre in 1901.[367] The play presents the life of three sisters in a pre-October 1917 revolutionary period in Russia, when the middle class had started to emerge. It presents inner-family relations and their collision with the social-political environment. Since then, it has been one of the most famous and greatest plays of the bourgeois theatre. Its tradition as a canonical play has been reinforced through the productions of the Actor's Studio's in New York directed by Lee Strasberg in the 1960s, as well as by the development of the celebrated Stanislavskian method of acting. It is no surprise then that LeCompte presented an interest in staging this play since it raises significant issues related to traditional realistic modes if representation in the theatre.[368]

[366] Euridice Arratia, 'Island Hopping Researching the Wooster Group's Brace up!', *Drama Review* 36.4 (Winter 1992): 120.
[367] For a comparative analysis of the two texts see Susie Mee, 'Chekhov's 'Three Sisters' and the Wooster Group's 'Brace up!', *Drama Review* 36: 4 (Winter, 1992): 143-153.
[368] *Anton Chekhov' Three Sisters*. By The Actor's Studio Theatre. Dir. Lee Strasberg. 1964. This historical performance is mentioned in Don B. Wilmeth and Tice L. Miller, eds., *The Cambridge Guide to American Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 154.

In *Brace Up!* LeCompte was directing a play in its entirety and not just parts of it for the first time. She used a translation by Paul Schmidt, a noted scholar of Russian theatre, who also performed as Chebutykin.[369] Her choice to present the translator on stage underscored a directorial trademark of intertextuality and self-referentiality. For Giesekam this:

> ... contributes to an ongoing, witty marking of Schmidt's role in the production. His continuing appearance on one of the monitors observing the action produces the effect of seeing the author/translator watching over the production.[370]

LeCompte also provoked the audience by casting the main protagonists. For example, Beatrice Roth in her 70s played the 21-year-old Irina and Joan Jonas in her 50s' played the middle sister Masha. Arratia states that 'Selecting actresses much older than the young women indicated by Chekhov was an initial major departure from the text, one of many that subverted orthodox expectations of the *Three Sisters*.'[371]

LeCompte directed the play as if it was to be performed by a travelling Japanese Geinin troupe in New York,[372] using Pacific Island dances, Japanese theatre and film to frame it,[373] blending in this way different cultures and theatre traditions, while segments of Chekhov's play were skipped and scenes were condense[374] intervening significantly in the dramaturgy of the play. She used footage of films such as *The Harvey Girls*, a

[369] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 95.
[370] Ibid, 96.
[371] Euridice Arratia, 'Island Hopping Researching the Wooster Group's Brace up!', 122.
[372] For 'tabi geinin', the 'travelling artists' in Japanese theatre history see Marilyn Ivi, *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995), 197.
[373] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 95.
[374] Euridice Arratia, 'Island Hopping Researching the Wooster Group's Brace up!', 125.

1946 musical featuring Judy Garland, Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V* (1989), and images of long running American television soap operas such as *All My Children* (since 1970).[375] All these were shown periodically on the monitors 'sometimes illustrating events in a way that is both literalising and amusingly at odds with the supposed setting of the Chekhov text' as Giesekam comments.[376] The Wooster Group had studied a documentary about the life of the Ichikawa Santuro Geinin troupe and they aimed to recreate parts of this documentary.[377] For this purpose another film was shot by the experimental cinematographer Leslie Thorton (in 1990-91), in which the group's members played the principal characters of the Japanese troupe.[378]

The technological means used in *Brace Up!* which the director has since become most famous for were: the extensive use of monitor screens on stage (live relay and pre-recorded performances), the editing of video images (clips from Japanese and other films), and the use of microphones and sound effects to produce alienated effects.

[375] *All My Children* is an American television soap opera aired on ABC commercial broadcasting television network for 41 years, from Jan. 5, 1970 to Sept. 23, 2011. 'All My Children (1970–2011),' *The Internet Movie Database (IMDb)*, accessed July 16, 2012. <http://www.imdb.com/ title/tt0065272/>.

[376] For the use of the film Giesekam states that: 'For example, when the fire rages through the town, Chekhov's stage directions state, 'A window, red with the glow of fire, can be seen through the open door. The sound of a passing fire engine is heard.' For this LeCompte substituted video of a fire sequence from The Harvey Girls, a 1946 musical featuring Judy Garland. Also, underlining the fact that most of the male characters are army officers who are eventually mobilised and despatched to a garrison in Poland, scenes from samurai movies occasionally appear, along with Kenneth Branagh's film of Shakespeare's Henry V. In the October 1990 version the latter played against the departure scenes of Act Four. While the incongruity of seeing Branagh rallying troops for battle was comic, it also provided a provocative parallel to the mobilisation: these men whom Chekhov portrays as idling about purposelessly in a sleepy provincial town are suddenly shipping off to a potentially dangerous posting.' Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 98.

[377] 'The main appropriation is from a documentary film about the life of the Ichikawa Santuro Geinin troupe, found early in the rehearsals.' Euridice Arratia, 'Island Hopping Researching the Wooster Group's Brace up!', 138.

[378] 'There, the performers recreated some of the activities of the daily life of the troupe as shown in the documentary.' Euridice Arratia, 'Island Hopping Researching the Wooster Group's Brace up!', 139.

According to Giesekam, multimedia technology was used to 'multiply points of focus in a scene' and to produce 'style-shifts through jumping from one medium to the other.'[379] As a result, multimedia technology mediated multiplicity (multiplication or division), giving the notion of intertextuality,[380] and enhanced the focus on various details, which gave the impression of 'multiple' staged viewpoints (multiple narratives) that mediated multilayered interpretations. It also mediated 'style-shifts' through a 'jumping', for example, from the theatrical medium to the filming medium and vice versa providing a narration for a contemporary audience, literate not only in theatre but also in cinematic and televisual modes of spectatorship. The character's actions on stage seemed to be derived from a completely different context rather than the familiar theatrical tradition, since they were framed by media. Baudrillard has crucially pointed out that 'information devours its own content' and that

> rather than creating communication, it exhausts itself in the act of staging communication. Rather than producing meaning, it exhausts itself in the staging of meaning.[381]

This reflects theories of the postmodern in the theatre according to which the staging of the communication process is visible to the audience as part of the performance. In this way, according to Giesekam, 'the production declared its intention to clear away the

[379] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 96.
[380] Arratia has already alleged that multimedia technology 'dramatized the multiplicity of choices involved in selecting and editing the text'. Euridice Arratia, 'Island Hopping Researching the Wooster Group's Brace up!', 130.
[381] Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 80.

dead wood of a tradition of handling Chekhov in a reverential, naturalistic fashion.'[382] Unsurprisingly LeCompte's directorial principles, i.e the visual collage of arbitrary fragmented objects, intertextuality and a nonlinear narrative, and deconstructive acting style, began to shift to new purposes in using multimedia technology.

In this way LeCompte challenged master narratives, or the 'the grand narratives' which according to Jean-François Lyotard, were represented in the theatre by the elaborate Chekhovian drama. This echoed Lyotard's depreciation of 'the grand narratives' delivered in his work *The Postmodern Condition*.[383] Heterogeneity and innovation are the basic elements which are directed against the 'grand narratives'. The 'end of grand narratives' of modernity, which can be termed as any legitimised knowledge which made an appeal to 'the dialectics of spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth,' according to Lyotard, highlights the postmodern condition.[384] LeCompte's use of multimedia technology seemed to question the past cultural codes of the Chekhovian drama and to exploit the new cultural codes of cinematic and televisual discourse on the real. Thus she introduced heterogeneity and innovation in directing by drifting towards the 'end of grand narratives' within the theatre.

[382] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 95.
[383] The posthuman condition is signifying that it is no longer possible to imagine daily operations that are not surrounded by or intersecting with technology. See Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).
[384] Ibid, xxiii.

But what of the play's theatricality? The first major directorial choice was the development of the role of the Narrator by Kate Valk. Valk, with microphone in hand, gets the show underway, reading Chekhov's stage directions to set the scene.[385] She also continuously moved the monitors around in the stage space providing a kinaesthetic effect.[386] Giesekam says that:

> This is underscored by the way cabling for microphones and monitors, extra floor lights, and people wielding cameras, all lent the setting the atmosphere of a television studio, with Valk sometimes resembling a Floor Manager coordinating the production.[387]

The Narrator-Valk in chat show style, interviewed the other characters, for example Peyton Smith's Olga, by asking her about her family or even the weather. Smith, who was seated to the rear, was videoed as she responded, and her image was relayed live to the monitors. Giesekam interpreted this saying that, 'Such remediation makes the sequence more palatable for a contemporary audience and draws attention to its expository function.'[388] Valk occasionally intervened in the dramaturgy, for example, when she introduced Act Two rather like fast-forwarding a video, suggesting that they skip the early expository part and asks Schmidt to summarise it, which he does, on video. Or later, when Vershinin, Tusenbach and Masha are philosophising about life,

[385] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 95.
[386] Phaedra Bell, 'Fixing the TV: Televisual Geography in the Wooster Group's Brace Up!' *Modern Drama* 48 (2005): 568.
[387] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 96.
[388] Ibid, 95.

Valk suggested fast-forwarding once again, but Schmidt interrupted, 'No, Kate, let Masha say the lines; it is a beautiful speech.'[389]

Valk introduced video performers, informing the audience that: 'Since the actor playing Soliony cannot be here tonight, every time he has to speak, we'll turn the TV loud; creating an amplified static noise, this does have a certain appropriateness for the argumentative Soliony.' [12] She also announced that:

> ... since the woman playing the servant Anfisa is too old to travel, she will appear on video. Anfisa's words were spoken by Josephine Buscemi, the 95 year-old great-grandmother of actor Steve Buscemi, whose wife videotaped her at home, while Buscemi fed her the cues.[390]

In this way, LeCompte shifted the role of the narrator's non-character to the role of the television manager who stressed the functionality and materiality of the theatrical stage by walking around, handling and moving the props, delivering stage directions, introducing the performers and the characters of the play, directing the actors' entrances and what they should do. The narrator's role (TV- stage manager) also shifted because of her intervention in the play's dramaturgy. One can therefore suggest that the medialities of the properties of technology – such as creating an amplified static noise to replace a character, videotaping performers at home to enhance a biographical referentiality, simulating the work of a TV coordinator, and interviewing the protagonists to augment the artificiality of the stage – were fully developed within the role of the narrator, who was presented as the alter ego of the director.

[389] Ibid, 96.
[390] Ibid, 96.

Her second major directorial choice, which was based on the use of multimedia and had enormous implications for the production, was her special use of space. LeCompte, according to Giesekam, saw space as divided into different zones of performance:

> The back area becomes the area of 'most private performance.' Performers in the middle section put their dark glasses on and 'think pure dance' ... the front section is the place for a 'declamatory style, speaking to the whole room.[391]

She used three TV monitors, two of which were fixed on parallel tracks attached to the floor of the stage allowing them to be rolled up- and downstage, and two extra monitors hanging above the audience on which the cast watched the performance.[392] Bell gives her interpretation saying that, 'Within this everywhere-at-once stage space, the Wooster Group transforms the three monitors into three boxes of nowhere-at-all.'[393] Bell interpreted this set design as a postmodern space that depicted more than one space:

> The set in *Brace Up!* works hard to pluralize place. While the set does indicate the Prózorov home in a fairly traditional post-realist way with actions and sparse properties, it also depicts the stage space as at least three other places at the same time: a lab, a studio, and a theatre. The linoleum work platform, the tables for dramaturg and 'on call' performers, the platform for translator Paul Schmidt, and the cameras and microphones all indicate different types of work places - places to experiment, rehearse, shoot video, and perform. *Brace Up!* doesn't stage either the Prózorov home, the lab, and the studio, or the theatre, but rather all of them at once.[394]

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[391] Ibid, 97.
[392] Euridice Arratia, 'Island Hopping Researching the Wooster Group's Brace up!', 124.
[393] Phaedra Bell, 'Fixing the TV', 568.
[394] Ibid, 567-768.

The medialites of the screen also had significant implications for LeCompte's directing. Giesekam describes the screen images as 'sometimes illustrating events in a way that is both literalising and amusingly at odds with the supposed setting of the Chekhov text.'[395] For example, in Act IV the army officers are in the end despatched to a garrison in Poland, and at the same time scenes from samurai movies appear, along with Kenneth Branagh's film of *Henry V*. Giesekam says of these choices: 'While the incongruity of seeing Branagh rallying troops for battle was comic, it also provided a provocative parallel to the mobilisation: these men whom Chekhov portrays as idling about purposelessly in a sleepy provincial town are suddenly shipping off to a potentially dangerous posting.'[396] The quotation of other material, such as the film footages, resulted in a comic-ironic effect and a contrast with the lethargic rhythm of the Chekhovian play. Consequently, the medialites of technology on stage radically changed the way that LeCompte's work was made and perceived, since they opened up her directing to multiple times, places, themes, parallelisms and meanings enhancing the notion of intertextuality.

LeCompte used on-screen performers extensively. There were a number of occasions when live performers interacted with other performers on film contributing to the narrative-dramaturgy, for example, the child Jack Dafoe as 'Bobic' and Josephine Buscemi as 'Anfisa' in *Brace Up!* The on-screen performers appeared primarily in close-ups shots against a dark background with little depth of field.[397] Scenes were also

[395] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 98.
[396] Ibid, 98.
[397] Phaedra Bell, 'Fixing the TV', 568.

filmed in two-shot, a type of shot in which the frame encompasses a view of two people or two subjects. The two-shot was also used to show the emotional reactions between the subjects. For example, when Natalya rushed from the dinner, tears were shown welling up in Kohler's eyes. The dramatic effect of this practice was complicated. Giesekam states that 'Turning the scene into a soap opera filmed in two-shot heightens its sentimentality, just as the sound of it on video underscores its intimacy.'[398] LeCompte has described the scenes of her production as being structured like autonomous 'islands' between which Kate Valk, who played the Narrator, provided bridging commentary. This directorial practice, as LeCompte has explained, derived from a necessity:

> We may have people coming and going because of the money situation. So I developed from the beginning the idea that anyone could come and go without disturbing the piece.[399]

For Giesekam, the directorial practice of mediating the live performance through sound and video equipment in *Brace Up!* created a dramatic irony.[400] This practice was related to a post-commentary, not only on the realist Chekhovian dramatic genre, but also on the over-romantic soap operas and TV's genre. Therefore, the role of video in LeCompte's directing was to mediate the effects of TV's genres in an attempt to shift the meaning of the play for an audience bound up with contemporary, institutional, popular, and cultural traditions.

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[398] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 96.
[399] LeCompte in Euridice Arratia, 'Island Hopping Researching the Wooster Group's Brace up!', 128.
[400] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 96.

LeCompte also conceptualised sound design as 'marks.' Some of the noises specified in the text were deliberately emphasised 'revealing the mechanism of the trick and forcing the audience to acknowledge the un-natural origin of the noise' as Arratia has observed.[401] For stage directions, such as 'somebody knocks on the floor downstairs', loud noises and echoes were produced by the technical operators.

> When she first asked the technicians for a door knock, and a perfect replica was delivered, she immediately objected: 'The knock on the door has to come louder, it is a mark, it is not real.'[402]

The use of sound mediated explicitly how hearing and listening could shape our experience and perception, it underlined the artificiality of the stage through the expository of how the mediatised sound works for our senses and demonstrated how the sound was able to cast doubt on the illusionism enhancing the alienating effects.

In conclusion, *Brace Up!* presented the new structural principles of LeCompte's directing. The juxtaposition of extremely dissimilar elements, for example, Chekhov's dramatic text versus Japanese film and the continual quotation of televisual aesthetics to produce 'style-shifts', all rooted her deeper engagement with multimedia technology. Additionally, the use of restaged images or remediation, such as the appropriation of the Geinin troupe documentary on stage triggered new interests related to the mediality of the historical archives as a source for enhancing historical intertextuality. LeCompte's use of multimedia technology led to multiplication, meaning the multiplicity of

[401] Euridice Arratia, 'Island Hopping Researching the Wooster Group's Brace up!', 132.
[402] Ibid, 132.

directorial visual choices, and the dramatisation of detail in order to enhance the stage narration. Paradoxically this practice produced contradictory effects: on one hand, there was intimacy created by heightening the sentimentality of scenes, showing, for example, precise details of the action which could never have been seen from the auditorium without the help of close-ups. The use of sound, on the other hand, was amusingly at odds with the text thus enhancing the spectator's critical thought and producing an estranged effect. In this section of this chapter I have demonstrated how technology gradually became intrinsic in the development of LeComptes's director's theatre. This will help in exploring the development of her directorial role with inter-mediality in the final section of this chapter. I will now examine what followed the turning point in her directing: fragmentary technology.

HOW THE THEORY OF FRAGMENTARY TECHNOLOGY IS EVIDENT IN LECOMPTE'S MODEL OF DIRECTING WITH TECHNOLOGY: THREE KEY POINTS

There are three key aspects of LeCompte's directorial work: the technical operator's improvisation and interaction with the performers; the application of video and sound as a mode of intertextuality, from the borrowing of TV techniques to the medialities of computer-assisted conventions for structuring the stage action; and finally the development of techno-acting through a type of cyborg theatre that highlights the notion of resistance or 'the deconstruction of presence'. It is these medialities of the technological medium/mediator in LeCompte's directing, I argue, that communicate a specific theatricality attesting not only to a theoretical framework for directing with

technology, but also illustrating a change in the role of the director herself through her application of technology.

How the technical operator improvises and interacts with the performers

Some examples of the activities of the technical operators will provide a better understanding of the devices and strategies of the director. LeCompte's starting point was improvisation with the dramaturgy-text by the performer-body. However, she exploited the element of technology through sound and video improvisations by the technicians, something which indicated a personal development. For example, in her productions it is regular practice for the text to be vocalised with a violent frenetic urgency, breathing and pitching sound through microphones, and voices manipulated by digital blurring, for example, the male and female voices. Film and video are used to improvise on the structural forms and editing techniques, and live action responds to live and pre-recorded sounds. LeCompte was committed to the notion of presenting technology in improvisation.[403] Her directing is hybrid based on a non-hierarchical relationship between theatrical and multimedia elements of the production, fusing the elements which emanate from theatre art itself and those which come directly from the world of audiovisual design. The actual practice of improvisation and interaction with technicians is explained by LeCompte:

[403] For the role of computers in music composition and the development of improvisation techniques see Smith and Dean, *Improvisation, Hypermedia and the Arts since 1945* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997), 55-103.

> For me, there are so many impulses that can be generated by a visual picture. One day you might respond to the way the camera moves and the next day you might respond to the fact that the person on the film looks in a certain direction.[404]

This reflects Auslander's argument on the role of mediatisation in theatre and performance (theatre has become more and more like other mediatised cultural forms).[405] When the technician has the anti-synergic characteristics and the potential of an actor in LeCompte's directing model, they can create the effect of estrangement.[406] Gradually, in the performance *Brace Up!* for example, the technological equipment was manipulated on stage by the performers themselves giving them the opportunity to structure the whole stage narration through the use of technology. Phaedra Bell states:

> A third monitor, on top of the stage-left monitor at preset, is small enough to be picked up and moved around the stage space over the course of the production in the *Brace Up!* [407]

Further developments took place as LeCompte engaged with the anti-synergic medialities of her technological collaborators. This started when Jim Clayburgh's set design in the trilogy *Three Places in Rhode Island* (1975-78) including slides and tapes in order to mediate a documentary style that presented collections of memories and the display of personal traumas/loss. James Bierman notes:

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[404] Andrew Quick, *The Wooster Group Work Book*, 216-217.

[405] According to Auslander's view the ontological differences between the live and the mediatised appear to be true but really are false. He suggests that the desire for live experiences is a product of mediatisation. The mediatised often satisfy the desire of the audience for artificial 'proximity' to the work of art better than the live. See Phillip Auslander, 'Liveness, Mediatization, and Intermedial Performance', *Degrés: Revue de synthèse à orientation sémiologique* 101 (Spring 2000): 1-12, accessed Jan. 20, 2010. <http://www.lcc.gatech.edu/~auslander/ publications/liveness.pdf>. See also Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).

[406] I will refer comparatively to this phenomenon in relation to LeCompte and Mitchell's practice in the conclusion of my thesis.

[407] Phaedra Bell, 'Fixing the TV', 567.

> The slides, tapes and letters are presented with apparent direct subjectivity. The work establishes its own documentary style and the performers manipulate the documents toward aesthetic ends without any concerns for falsifying the events. ... Gray can thus present records of a devastating moment in his family history without the expected personal involvement. The process he and Elizabeth LeCompte are concerned with is that of using the records of factual material as blocks for structuring the theatre piece. The response that material demands in such context is aesthetic, not psychological.[408]

Bierman emphasises that the response to the above media was 'aesthetic' not 'psychological' highlighting in this way the anti-synergic role of technology's mediality. This also means that by understanding media's agency in LeCompte's work an aesthetic has been established evolving her directing.

A few years later in *LSD* (1985) the designer was not only present on stage during the performance, but also he established a very active role, which was visually perceived by the audience at the same time as the actor's performance providing a contrast to the presence of the characters on stage. LeCompte revealed the traces and blueprints of other collaborators than those of the actors. Arnold Aronson stated:

> Jim Clayburgh, the Group's designer and technical person, sits at the left end of the table behind the phonograph and other sound equipment. He plays a Maynerd Ferguson album, and shows the jacket to the audience while reading parts of the liner notes. He will control sound levels and act as a time-keeper for the other readings.[409]

[408] James Bierman, 'Three Places in Rhode Island', 30.
[409] Arnold Aronson, 'The Wooster Group's L.S.D. … Just the High Points', *Drama Review* 29.2 (Summer 1985): 68.

Therefore, a shift has taken place since not only the medium is aestheticised but also its agent. Any actor, on stage or on the screen, any technician, and any object - including computer-assisted or other technology-based apparatus, such as the camera or the film, seems to be equally important in LeCompte's directorial system, shattering the traditional preconceptions on directing, because they all reproduce and extend the mediality of the stage language with the intention of producing a post-Brechtian theatre of estrangement or disembodiment, which has become LeCompte's directorial trademark.

In this director's theatre the most important finding is that particular qualities of the performance are straightforwardly linked with the role of the technicians. The most important implication for directing is the fact that the traditional hierarchy of the actor and dramaturgy as the most important elements of the directorial system are shattered, since technical apparatus and technical crew seem to create a voyeuristic effect significant in understanding the aesthetics of the performance. The fact that one can identify in LeCompte's work, as a primary motivation, the discovery of a new creative potentiality for the stage, explicitly inherent in the agents of the technological medium, further suggests that there is an essential relationship. If within this framework directing and technology can communicate efficiently because they can manage to speak the same language then they support a distinctive type of theatricality, which I will demonstrate in detail in the last section of this chapter.

SOUND, TV, VIDEO AND COMPUTERS IN THE STRUCTURE OF STAGE ACTION

LeCompte's performance practice exposes the working arrangements of sound materials and apparatuses. For example, she presents sound chambers with viewing panels through which the performer's voices are filtered. In addition, performers' voices in various registers, speaking, shouting, singing, or muttering are often supplemented by 'blips, squawks and quacks,'[410] or a variety of unintentional noises such as crashing deafening music, swelling chords, drills, gunfire and alarms.[411] Actors talk through viper-throat microphones or through electronic speech-distancing devices and speeches are heard through telephones, sound recorders, and standing microphones. Pre-recorded sounds and music, such as rock music, intervene repeatedly in the action. Furthermore, the live actors' voices stand in for the voices or the video performances offering a very sophisticated form of aural-corporeal presence.[412] This specific way of forming sound landscapes shapes the audiences' experience and perceptions of the performance.

Historically, sound has always been a functional element that supported the narrative of the performance, emulating the nature of location, or mood the so-called 'environmental sound'. Sound design however, has been relatively ignored by the

[410] For this type of 'narrative tracks' see Marranca: 'In Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights, on-stage 'characters' in Stein's play have their speeches punctuated by a computer-generated sound score of 'quacks' and 'bings' and 'blips.'' Bonnie Marranca, 'The Wooster Group: A Dictionary of Ideas', 4. *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights* by Gertrude Stein first published in 1949. For this play see Stein, *Writings 1932–1946*, ed. Catharine R. Stimpson, vol. 2. (New York: Library of America, 1998), 575-609.

[411] In *Route 1 & 9* (1998) for example. For a fuller description see Greg Giesekam, Staging the Screen, 84.

[412] In *House/Lights* performers wear earpieces in which they hear a recording of the text from the play and the soundtrack from the film that cues their speech. LeCompte says: 'House/Lights was the first time we had access to that particular piece of equipment - the in-ear receiver. But people had used similar devices in other pieces: Peyton in *Fish Story* (1994) and *Brace Up!* (1991). She used this device whenever she had to speak and there was a lot of other stuff going on. She'd get a bit rattled and she was unable to center herself, like in the fire scene in *Brace Up!*, with everybody running around with all that noise. So we recorded her speaking her lines and at that moment she's listening to the lines and just saying them back as she spoke them originally on the recording.' Andrew Quick, *The Wooster Group Work Book*, 216.

traditional theatre directors and has not been thought of as a valid aspect of production design but as an interfering, decorative element that had no valid creative function and limited parameters for the performance. Central to this preconception was the fact that sound could not intervene substantially in the spoken word in performance, since directors in the past used to prioritise the spoken word.[413] LeCompte, in contrast, emphasised sound design and audio technology in her performances. She produced a form of dramatic effect that stemmed not only from the action, but also from the use of sound, music, voice and noise. She talks about 'creating sound sculpture' for her works; she claims that she 'wouldn't do a show without the sound - that would be like losing one of the performers.'[414] She also states that 'sound is designed right along with performance as we create the show' identifying an alternative way in which sound designers reflect and correspond with the performance.[415] The creation of acoustic environments and auditory art forms within the sphere of performance offers a radical shift in the nature of theatre directing.

Some of LeCompte's practices which underline a deeper interaction with various media, are the extensive use of television monitors or video projection screens that are suspended above the performers or at the ground level (the lower forestage and upper backstage areas) or placed on tables beside the performers. These suggest a familial and

[413] For the history of sound design see Rhys Davies, 'An Alternative Guide to Modern Theatre Sound and Design' (MA Thesis, Goldsmiths College, University of London, 1997).
[414] LeCompte states that 'Sound is designed right along with performance as we create the show.' Michael Sommers, 'Why do you need sound anyway: Talking to prominent directors about the importance of the sound design?' *Theatre Crafts International: Sound is the Technology of the 90s* 25.6 (Aug.-Sept. 1991): 36.
[415] Ibid, 36.

intimate setting to an audience which has grown up within a dominant televisual culture. In this way, LeCompte intended to overcome the gap which exists between stage and audience in the theatrical environment. The notion of 'frame within the frame' is celebrated here by integrating live action with the mediated, in a pure formalism where the properties of the TV box or screen medium are the principal aesthetical aspects of the production.

But why did LeCompte persistently use television monitors scattered on stage? She explains:

> These old televisions are also boxes and it's a beautiful thing that there is something inside this box. You always have that freedom with a TV, even if it's a flat screen. If you take away the light producing front and put in a neutral density filter on the screen, it's more like you have to go into the TV rather than have the image coming at you. And for me that was very pleasing. You seem to think that these things are actually happening in the box. Like when you were a child - you probably didn't do this - but when I was a child, I would take the boxes my parents had no use for and I would cut the bottom out and cut a hole in it and pretend I was on the television.[416]

Furthermore, LeCompte has spoken about the first phase in the development of her directing under the influence of multi-mediality:

> The biggest thing for us … was that thing about learning not to anticipate what you are going to see on the televisions - in the same way that a lot of acting teachers talk about not anticipating how you are going to feel in a certain scene and to always be open and responsive. You know that the performers are going to do the same thing because they have a particular blocking and the task is to somehow make this new every night. To do this with a television, you have to

[416] Andrew Quick, *The Wooster Group Work Book*, 108.

> turn the television into another actor, a participator in the scene with you, one that you can't ever take for granted. You have to imagine, when you look at the TV, that it's for the first time and take on whatever is presented to you at that moment, so that you don't prepare for it. I'm taking what's a normal discipline in theater and applying it to the TV - people think of TV as a mechanized thing, but you can't do that here.[417]

LeCompte coupled the improvisational elements of the performance with the presence of technology on stage and explained it all in a very simple way: 'you have to turn the television into another actor'.

Wonderfully inspired by her designer and permanent collaborator Jim Clayburgh, LeCompte's settings have been based on an futuristic architectural complex of standing lamps and vertical panels of fluorescent lights, TV monitors fixed on tracks attached to the floor of the stage allowing them to be rolled-up and downstage, mobile props, such as wheelchairs, mains lead and wireless microphones, live camera footage, metal framework structured design, ramps, platforms, and lap-top computers.[418] This design constructed a techno-territoriality or techno-landscape based on a technological formalism and materialism.[419] It revealed the workings of technological medialities since the design mediated an impression of a technological jungle or organised chaos, something which has been identified as LeCompte's directorial trademark.

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[417] Ibid, 216-217.
[418] For Clayburgh's design practices see Mathew Maguire and Jim Clayburgh, 'Light, Memory, and other Questions: A Correspondence between Jim Clayburgh and Mathew Maguire,' in *Trans-Global Readings: Crossing Theatrical Boundaries*, ed. Caridad Svich (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 116-122.
[419] For a history of formalism in visual arts see E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (London: Phaethon, 1969), 93-143.

Fantastically, LeCompte used the iconography of a technological cemetery in which the presence of obsolete technologies, including print, photography, analogue film, pre-digital TV, tape recording, indicated the collective cultural experience of the history of representation, recycled and blended with new technologies. The forms and functions of cultural imagination were reflected in images, symbols, rituals, art, history, memory, and the collective unconscious.[420] In this cultural techno-cemetery, phantasms of the past influenced and haunted the new generation of theatre practitioners. The new elements that have emerged from the next generation, within a post-postmodern urban culture, seemed to coexist with the relics of past traditions. This directorial strategy broke the continuity of the illusionistic-realistic action; it revealed representational instabilities and negated unified aesthetic positions.

LeCompte's directing furthered the notion of resistance. She applied the same problem of deconstruction not only to the dramaturgy and acting but also to conventional technological artefacts with the intention of forcing a rethink on certain mythologies (de-mythologising). Greg Giesekam analyses this attitude:

> In common with other contemporary theatre makers, LeCompte also likens the way productions flit to and fro between various narratives and modes of performance to channel-hopping on television, moving backwards and forwards between fiction, documentary, news, comedy, and so on. She sees no reason why, if we are comfortable doing this when watching television, we should not feel comfortable when theatre produces the same effect.[421]

[420] Carl Jung, *The Archetypes and The Collective Unconscious*, trans. by R.F.C. Hull, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).
[421] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 82.

As I will discuss in LeCompte's direction of *Hamlet*, she shifted her directing by demonstrating the notion of hyper-linking as it is used in computers, as a neo-deconstructive style. According to Manovich, 'A hyperlink creates a connection between two elements' and elements connected through hyperlinks 'can exist only in the same computer or in different computers connected on a network' producing a specific mental process.[422] In LeCompte's directing, the use and hyper-linking of many fragments such as multimedia windows, performers and interactions mediate (following the logic of remediation) a multilayered digital aesthetic, affect stage action and, therefore, provoke connections in the spectator's mind with computer hyper-linking.

LeCompte's directing differs from other models which use the medialites of technology in that it demonstrates the organising principles of new media (hyper-media). She borrows from TV techniques to structure the stage action and borrows the medialities of computer-assisted conventions, such as hyper-linking. In the context of remediation the content of one medium is always another medium in her directing. She also recreates the clichéd styles of TV acting and instructs her actors to replicate past video-recorded traces of actorly presence. In this way she presents a critical rethink of the relationship between live acting and the recorded performance. The shift in her directing takes place when the theatrical narration-action-acting simulates the qualities of a film. Zooming and fast-forwarding create a new type of theatrical performance reality revealing her inextricable connection with directing and technology.

[422] Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media*, 41.

TECHNO-ACTING AND THE DECONSTRUCTION OF THE PRESENCE

LeCompte's actors became 'movers' or 'sculptors' of the technology and the multimedia features on stage. For example, her productions involve one or more video screens that the actors move among or stand in front of. She also uses movable microphones, changeable lighting and a lot of cabling. Aronson, for example, notes that microphones 'referred to a hearing or investigation and have a purely aesthetic use.' [423] The performer Kate Valk in an interview with Andrew Quick offers more information on how the Wooster Group developed an acting style through improvising with multimedia:

> When we sketched out our physical score from the film it was more like a translation. There weren't strict rules. It was like being in a playing field where you had to imagine where the camera was. It wasn't always in relation to the live camera in the center of the stage. When we were developing the movement, you could make the camera be anywhere. So, if there was a close-up, you had to find it for yourself. You had to decide how to mark something as a close-up and it was the same thing for medium and long shots. Then there was the way the camera moved, you had to translate this to the theater space too.[424]

Through these techniques LeCompte seems to make a directorial statement: that all these systems - such as the acting system and technology - share common anti-synergic characteristics. She implies not only that there are no hierarchical categories within the theatrical environment, but also that the co-presence and the more complicated interactions between the actorly medium and other media (mediators) allows new meanings to emerge, especially for the directing itself.

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[423] Arnold Aronson, 'The Wooster Group's L.S.D. … Just The High Points', 72.
[424] For a fuller description on the performance *House/Lights* (1998) see Andrew Quick, *The Wooster Group Work Book*, 215.

LeCompte's directing establishes a special logistic based on the mutability of bodies and scenery on stage suggesting an urban-subcultural-technological jungle or a frantic/chaotic juggling act in which the unspoken thoughts and imaginary fascinations of the play's characters can be given a visual form. In LeCompte's performances, there is repeated use of a sophisticated set design based on an architectural complex of standing lamps and vertical panels of fluorescent lights, TV monitors fixed on tracks attached to the floor of the stage thus allowing them to be rolled-up and downstage. She also uses mobile props, such as wheelchairs, mains lead and wireless microphones, live camera footage, metal framework structured design, ramps, platforms, lap-top computers. All contribute to the construction of a specific form of territoriality and techno-landscape that can be interpreted by a subconscious dystopian technological imaginary, based on the aesthetical principles of formalism-materialism (self-contained and self-referential plasticality of the work of art).

The notion of technological fragmentation in LeCompte's work can be further explored though the 'cyborg myth'. Since Frankenstein's monster, the cyborg myth and the techno-teratological imagery have been depicted extensively in literature or films. As Donna J. Haraway states, the human-machine hybrid challenges the preconceptions that determine how life is understood.[425] Preconceptions about the legitimate

[425] Debra Shaw, *Technoculture: The Key Concepts* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2008), 61. The politics of contemporary bodies has also been explored by Deleuze and Guattari through their notion of 'body without organs'. For a detailed description see Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, 'How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Organs?' in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 149-166. See also Appendix B.

representation of the body on stage are challenged by LeCompte, in continuity with the rest of her ideology that I have explored earlier in this chapter (negation, breaking the rules). In LeCompte's work there is a general return to the art of the body and to the idea of subjectivity through the representation of techno-bodies and according to Jennifer Parker-Starbuck the expansion of a cyborg theatre. Parker-Starbuck claims that:

> The use of fragmentation and dislocation is a trademark of LeCompte's stage view. Video screens often isolate the live actors from their mediatized selves, either creating split personalities that obliquely question essentialist identity formation, or acting as literal representations of the multiple texts and characters within those texts.[426]

Consequently, for Parker-Starbuck the notion of the cyborg goes beyond form and presentation to the very heart of the theatrical art.[427] The representation of cultural myths and technologically-generated tools on stage develops a visual hybrid connecting the cyborg myth with the potential to change the theatre and rethink mythologies (supporting the notion of de-mythologising).

Video technology can highlight the body's duality. For example, the digitised masks in front of the actor's face or body, create cyborgs, half live, half mediated, destabilise the operation of the live performance and challenging its authority. Greg Giesekam has commented on LeCompte's directing:

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[426] Jennifer Parker-Starbuck, 'Framing the Fragments: The Wooster Group's Use of Technology', in *The Wooster Group and its Traditions*, ed. Johan Callens, 223.

[427] For example, the theme of the myth of the American technological progress in the play *House/Lights* can be instantly understood through the use of cutting-edge work in live-video technology applied in this performance. As a result, in this production the myth and the tool have mutually worked together to structure the framings of the performance.

> The cyborgian fusion of live and videotaped performer also further marked the making of the performance, showing it as a product of mediation and refusing to naturalise its depiction of events; in later work such cyborg-like images become almost a Wooster Group trademark.[428]

This mode has as its result the re/de-structuring of the territory of prefixed hierarchies or preconceptions about legitimate representations in the theatre and propagandising a type of liberal humanism, where the attitude towards the presence of mediatised bodies on stage has radically changed.[429] The cultivation of the intellect through the interaction of stories, myths, bodies and technological tools leads to an active and interconnected body of knowledge. This is intended to challenge preconceptions, in accordance with the directorial principle of negation ('product of mediation' and 'refusing to naturalise' in Giesekam) and opens the way to a strictly political, social, cultural embedded humanism.

Additionally, the overlapping of text, sound, and visual elements mediated by sophisticated technology provided a system of action which produced an anti-synergic theatrical composition. An example of this was when mobile plasma screens moved slowly in front of the actors distorting the image of their bodies. Performers positioned themselves behind the screens, while live video close-ups of specific body parts for

[428] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 89.
[429] In the same sprit with the philosophy of 'liberal humanism' which supports that a commitment to man, whose essence is freedom, is the freedom of choice. According to this philosophy the work of art is distantly and subtly influenced by the socio-political circumstances in which it is produced.' For more on liberal humanism see Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2002), 16-21.

example of the head, foot, groin, and torso were projected on the screens.[430] Amy Strahler-Holzapfel makes a perceptive remark on this practice:

> What the use of video allows … is the staging of what might be called a theory of bodily metonymy, a process in visual mediazation through which the body is defined only as the sum of its isolated, discreet parts.[431]

The aesthetic entity of technology on stage provides a metaphorical narrative, 'a theory of bodily metonymy', serving very specific purposes, such as those of criticism and scepticism towards postmodernism and technoculture, in which the body exposes its hidden structure through its deconstructed imagery. Time (rhythm), space (scenography), body (actors), image (video) and sound (sound effects, music) on stage seem to operate according to technological principles which are re-discovered and fully exposed. In this section I have identified the three major characteristics of fragmentary technology which permits a reading of the developmental directorial work of LeCompte: the technical operators' improvisation and interaction with the performers; the use of video and sound as intertextuality and as medialities of computer-assisted conventions for structuring the stage action; and, finally, the development of techno-acting that highlights the notion of the resistance of presence.

[430] See the video designed by Philip Bussmann in *To You the Birdie!* (2001).
[431] Amy Strahler-Holzapfel, 'The Body in Pieces: Contemporary Anatomy Theatres', *Performing Arts Journal* 89 (2008): 6.

A CASE-STUDY: HAMLET

In her production of *Hamlet* (2006, 2007) LeCompte used technology in a way that revealed how her directing had become inextricably connected with technology.[432] Her starting point was not Shakespeare's play but the recording of the Broadway production of 1964 directed by John Gielgud and starring Richard Burton as Hamlet. There was a critical relationship between live acting and the recorded performance, via the introduction of the genre of 'theatrofilm' by Electronovision.[433] The 'theatrofilm' was filmed with the use of seventeen cameras and was broadcast live for two days in 2,000 movie theatres all over the United States via, according to Sarah Werner, 'the miracle of Electronovision.'[434] By using digital archives (database in the age of digital reproduction) as an essential part of the performance, LeCompte reconsidered and reinterpreted the work of dramatic-live performance and its critical relation to the recorded performance. As Werner notes, she indicated 'a psychograph of the way that performance moves outside itself, drawing on other performances and producing multiple views'.[435] The question in LeCompte's directing seemed no longer to be the one of ownership and authenticity (such as historical intertextuality as in the *Brace Up!*), but rather that of distribution 'how performance moves outside itself', and the role

[432] *Hamlet* by the Wooster Group was first premiered in 16 - 20 November 2006 at Hebbel Theater in Berlin, Germany. In the US *Hamlet* premiered in 9 October - 2 December 2007 at The Public Theater, in New York. I had the opportunity to attend this performance when it was performed in the New York' Public Theater. See The Wooster Group. *Hamlet*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Elisabeth LeCompte. The Public Theater in association with St. Ann's Warehouse, New York, 9 October- 2 December 2007. Programme.

[433] 'Richard Burton talks Electronovision', accessed Feb. 20, 2009. <http://youtube.com/watch?v=sLQDW4ZqckQ)>.

[434] Sarah Werner, 'Two Hamlets: Wooster Group and Synetic Theater' *Shakespeare Quarterly* 59.3 (Fall 2008): 322.

[435] W. B. Worthen, 'Hamlet at Ground Zero', 310.

of the dramatic performance in information culture – 'how it is drawing on other performances' and 'producing multiple views' as a cultural phenomenon. The reviewer Ben Brantley writes: 'Any sense of what Burton's Hamlet was really like becomes as unreliable and mutable as memory.'[436] What was important, was that it brought a new approach to LeCompte's former notion of the role of archives signifying a change in her directorial model.

LeCompte favours the mediality of the presence of the technical operator on stage and their interaction-improvising with the performers during the performance, which became a key factor in the evolution of dramaturgy in this performance. For example, Scott Shepherd as Hamlet addresses (as did Valk with the co-actors in *Brace Up!*) a video operator several times on stage: 'All right, play the tape' and the Burton film starts on the screen; 'Let's go to that speech about Rome' and the technician puts the film fast-forward; 'Fast forward to the cockcrow' and the technician again fast-forwards the tape. In another scene Shepherd-Hamlet says to the operator: 'We better skip this Ophelia stuff. Let's go straight to the play.' The operator moves forward the film 'providing one of the most comic scenes' as Worthen states.[437] The video operator edits the film live during each performance and feels free to play with and manipulate the structure of the dramatic text, as well as to play with and manipulate the structure of the whole performance. LeCompte's purpose is clearly to overcome the gap which exists between performers, technicians and audience in the theatrical environment, by the

[436] Ben Brantley, 'Looks It Not Like the King? Well, More Like Burton,' *New York Times* (Nov. 1, 2007), accessed Mar. 10, 2011. <http://theater.nytimes.com/ 2007/11/01/theater/reviews/ 01haml.html>.
[437] Worthen mentions that 'Throughout the evening Scott Shepherd (and occasionally other actors) directs the video operator to stop or skip ahead.' W. B. Worthen, 'Hamlet at Ground Zero', 318.

mediality of skipping parts of the archive this time, as she used to do in the past with the play-text during the performance, like in the case of the *Brace Up!* The meta-theatrical mimesis that exposes theatricality (the notion of self-referentiality), is applied directly on the technician-technical operator's role placed in the auditorium. In this way digital technology through the form of the digital archive replaces the role of the play-text and the meta-theatrical commentary shifts on the dramaturgy of the screen (recorded historical performance that has now the form of a digital archive).

In *Hamlet*, video projections include Richard Burton's film, as well as other *Hamlet*s, Michael Almereyda's (2000), Grigori Kozintsev's (1964) and Kenneth Branagh's (1996) filming of the play. In this demonstration of intertextuality the Shakespearian play is studied through another medium: the film. The broader interrelations between theatre and film as types of performative media and the display of prestigious historical productions of the famous play are fully articulated through this intertextual use of video. LeCompte's directorial strategy was to illustrate cultural influences and commentary in this performance. In previous performances, LeCompte had employed video with the intention of making the most of the play's multilayered intertextuality illustrating how the medialities of technology are able to produce a narrative organisation on stage. In *Hamlet*, this notion shifts since she presents not just a film performance from a theatrical archive, but the electronovision recording of a live broadcast in 1964 all over the United States, adding another layer to the notion of theatre within theatre increasing the notion of framing. The medialities of technology seem to have expanded to a notion of archive (recorded historical performance

distributed through the 'miracle' of electronovision) within archive (digital archive, database), as well as a notion of mediated within mediated, as a new type of self-referentiality and 'appropriation and transgression'. In this way LeCompte's 'staging philosophy', reflecting on Krasner and Saltz, that aims at the 'pursuit of the truth', reveals that the effect of hyper-mediacy convey the effects of a more complex type of self-referentiality, through the use of hypertextual methods and presentations' multiplicity. LeCompte attempts to perform an anatomical operation of the staged and recorded performance contributing to the notion of theatre as hypermedium, as has been discussed by Chapple and Kattenbelt. The notion of circulating theatre history within new contexts such as the use of the new cultural paradigm such as digital archives and databases (hyper-media) manifest the workings of inter-mediality in LeCompte's directing.

On stage, dramatic effects are created by the actors who mirror the actions of the performers in the film, under the influence of the remediation. In this way the authority of the film is unquestionable.[438] However, there is another element that highlights the authority of the film: in *Hamlet* the film has several unexplained lacunae. The screen suddenly goes blue and the word 'unrendered' appears. That is the moment when, as Worthen remarks, 'the actors are released from impersonation', since they can 'take a break, make a phone call, or read a magazine'.[439] Worthen adds: 'When the film does

[438] Koestler attempts to show how the moral development of humans (psychological and intellectual development) has a new moral sense of purpose to match humankind's creative and technological achievements. Koestler, *The Ghost in the Machine* (1967).
[439] W. B. Worthen, 'Hamlet at Ground Zero', 319.

not exist then the theatrical performance does not exist either.'[440] The absence of the film suggests the destruction of the whole theatrical world and of the whole performance. The reality of the film determines the theatrical reality, since, in the perceived hierarchy, live work seems to have secondary importance. The actor's presence seems to cut off the past and two distinguished performances/courses of action (screen-past and stage-present) seem to take place.

LeCompte also intends to work with the aesthetics of the new media, to further explore the power of the electronic image to degenerate the authenticity of the live or recorded presence, an aim that had been a characteristic of her model of fragmentary technology. This reflects on Auslander's 'liveness' and 'mediatisation' discourse, according to which 'liveness must be examined not as global undifferentiated phenomenon but within specific cultural and social contexts' and, therefore, 'liveness' or the ontology of the performance, is a result of 'mediatisation' the ontology of the technology. Auslander raises the question of whether there really are clear-cut ontological distinctions between live forms and mediatised ones. 'If live performance cannot be shown to be economically independent of and ontologically different from mediatized forms in what sense can liveness function as site of cultural and ideological resistance?'[441] For example, in *Hamlet* there are moments where Burton's body is digitally faded from the screen leaving only his raised hand visible. This is in juxtaposition with Shepherd's live body on stage, and gives the impression of 'a body

[440] Ibid, 319.
[441] Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 7.

being left helpless and of being defined without the digital authority as a backup'.[442] The audience re-experiences the past in a new way and the vulnerability of the digital archive re-shapes the audience's view on the method of preserving cultural history. Therefore, the ontology of the human being or the ontology of the artist-actor on stage in the model of fragmentary technology is not just accompanied by machinery-technology, but also undergoes significant revolution and remediation with the new ideas and trends developed within a preeminent digital culture (which includes the notions of simulation and the real, virtualisation, etcetera).[443] In the same way, LeCompte herself as a director has evolved with technology.

The medialities of video editing in LeCompte's directing model and the significant influence this had on the aesthetics of the performance have already been discussed.[444] From her early performances, she has included electrostatic 'snow', frozen performers' images in black and white stills,[445] capitalised sub-titles to underscore certain lines or awkward editing jumps, for example, the image of the speaker coughing, repeating a line, correcting themselves etcetera.[446] In *Hamlet*, the editing of the film also includes ruptures, accelerations, cut-up techniques, and several types of discontinuities which generated a particular form of energy and disruption. As a result, the audience is

[442] Ibid, 319.
[443] I reflect here on Arthiur Koestler's theory on the 'ghost in the machine'. For more on the 'Ghost in the Machine' theory on the *Philosophy of the Mind* see Arthur Koestler, *The Ghost in the Machine* (New York: Macmillan, 1967). See also Appendix B.
[444] For more about the video composition see Ken Kobland's (filmmaker and video designer) narration on the *L.S.D. (...Just the High Points...)* (1984) analysed by David Savran, *Breaking the Rules* (Ann Arbor: UMI Reserch Press, 1986), 209-211.
[445] In *Route 1 & 9* (1981). See Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 84.
[446] Greg Giesekam states that 'The style of the video here, however, problematises Fadiman's approach, provoking spectators to question the extent to which they are imbued with the beliefs assumed by the lecturer.' Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 84.

never completely immersed in the performance. The process of continuous rapid editing entails a sustained state of nervousness or uneasiness.

Another example of LeCompte's use of sound in *Hamlet*, in her model of fragmentary technology can be found in the dialogue between on stage-Hamlet/Scott Shepherd and the video-projected presence of on screen-Hamlet/Richard Burton who continuously speak together. Sometimes they begin together and then gradually Burton's voice fades out. Kate Valk's Ophelia is also echoed by a second, high-pitched voice from the video-projected presence of Linda Marsh from a 1964 performance, a directorial strategy that gives the impression that Valk's live, distorted voice is redubbing Marsh's. In the same way, Ari Fliakos redubs John Gielgud's voice of the Ghost. W.B. Worthen has remarked that the voice 'is the sign of an external authority remaking the body'.[447] The dramatic effect of the past-present sharing the dramatic space-time together, adding in this way a dual-ontological-narratological layering effect, derives, therefore, significantly from the sophisticated use of the sound technology.

In LeCompte's model the actor's live or recorded voice can be subjected to immediate transformation through a real-time digitally encoded process. The process is able to erase the historical performance of 1964 providing a critical dramatic effect. LeCompte shows how theatrical past and present can coexist via the use of sound technology as she develops from the notion of intertextuality to the notion of interactivity. However, is not the performer on stage that is being tracked by cameras

[447] W. B. Worthen, 'Hamlet at Ground Zero', 318.

and sensors, but the performer on the screen through the use of monitors scattered on stage (allowing the live performers to see the film so as to synchronise their actions with the video) expanding in this way the spatio-temporal concept of the performance. The 'replicants', actors acting in the present, just like actors as 'masks', 'shells' and 'marks' in her former performances, when compared to their virtual models of acting, actors acting in the past tense, give the impression that they have been deprived of their strength to interpret and, as a result, to transcend the historical past. The 'un-concealment process', reflecting on Krasner and Saltz, critically depends on the denudation of the live performance-acting (alienation effect) in favour of the screen performance-acting (intimacy effect through nostalgia and collective memory). A primary goal for LeCompte's directing model with technology is to determine how such technological elements, like video and sound design, digital systems and real-time processing, work together with the actors' performances and the play/text in order to shape the effects upon the audience within new contexts such as digital culture. In this way, fragmentary technology seems to have triggered a change of her role as a director, since the more technology changes and develops, the more her directing seems to be significantly affected.

In *Hamlet*, the audience has a panoptic perspective of the *Hamlet* of the past and the *Hamlet* of the present through the use of a screen projection of Richard Burton's performance and the simulacra-based performance of the Wooster Group. [448] LeCompte, by imitating the movements and the editing techniques of the camera, the mediating

[448] Simulacra are the copies of the copies (photographs).

apparatus itself, presents a new pattern of the interrelationship between the two different media, theatre and film as actors adjust their performances in order to remediate/refunction the movements of the camera and add another layer to the techno-acting. The process of simulation is based on a world that can be copied and materialised through a system of technological reproduction that constructs a reality.[449] LeCompte's *Hamlet* develops this idea further through its attempt to mimic Richard Burton's performance. The performers simulate the actors' gestures in the film but more, they simulate, or else remediate, the camera's action. For example, the actors move downstage closer to the audience to replicate the movie camera close-ups of the Burton film. When there is a different angle of shot in the film, the actors on stage shift their bodies to simulate that change, for example, when the camera zooms in on the furniture in the film, the actors roll the table to the front of the stage simulating the zooming of the camera. In this way the world of the film is copied and materialised not through a system of technological reproduction, but through the theatrical narration-action-acting itself that mirrors the film, zooming, fast-forwarding and constructing a new type of theatrical reality for the audience.

LeCompte develops the Baudrillardian idea of simulacra or loss of the real and surface without depth by reversing it, by 'breaking the rules' of a digital film archive canon, and therefore she challenges that ideology. According to Baudrillard, simulacra which is 'the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal' have

[449] Lovejoy states that 'Simulation refers to the creation of fundamental models which appear to be perfectly natural or real but in reality have only been made to appear through the agency of programmed digital information. ... Simulation is a mathematical model of the real, a new kind or representation.' Margot Lovejoy, *Digital Currents: Art in the Electronic Age* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 159.

become real and the real has become the simulation.[450] For him 'whereas representation attempts to absorb simulation by interpreting it as a false representation, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation itself as a simulacrum.'[451] In the work of LeCompte, the staging of *Hamlet* has become a simulation of the recorded *Hamlet* and this type of simulation in the theatre encompasses the system of theatrical representation 'as a simulacrum' thus echoing Baudrillard. *Hamlet* can be copied and materialised through technological reproduction and then the same *Hamlet* is re-copied and re-materialised through theatrical production. But this idea generates further problems: for example, what is going to happen when the Wooster Group's *Hamlet* is going to be an archive-stored data itself? Shall then the next generation of theatre scholars, who want to study the Wooster Group's performance through future video archives, focus on the exuberant and inexhaustible frame within the frame within the frame or on multiple series of simulacra (continuous mediation) for their analysis? How will the Group's performance as an archive be generated and maintained under a future user's point of view? How the medium can become our main interpretative focus? The question clearly shows that there are several facets to this theatrical evolution (participation and at the same time commentary of the theatre history just as the computer users) and that the medialities of technology, in this example the effect of inter-mediality (through the act of the stage remediating the workings of digital media), will have a profound influence on directing (as a new type of *mise en abyme* device in the theatre).[452] In her production

[450] Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton and Philip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), 2.
[451] Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulations*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1994), 6.
[452] 'Mise-en-abyme,' in Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre*, 215-216.

of *Hamlet*, I have illustrated how LeCompte used fragmentary technology with the influence of inter-mediality and traced the moments of rupture and the turning points inspired by the development of technology. This has offered insight into the identification of a theatrical phenomenon related to the art of the director, which is the main focus of this thesis.

THEATRICALITY AND THE MEDIALITIES OF FRAGMENTARY TECHNOLOGY IN LECOMPTE'S DIRECTING

Ric Knowles has argued that in staging a technologically sophisticated performance LeCompte 'stages a tension at the heart of her work.'[453] In such a way, Knowles pinpoints where the intensities in LeCompte's work lay and suggests that technology offers a new insight into her work. But what are the crucial aspects of this tension under the prism of the directing model of fragmentary technology? How do these relate to a post-theatre of estrangement? And what has developed in LeCompte's directing?

LeCompte's directing with technology has followed a historical trajectory from the notion of mediality to multi-mediality and inter-mediality and thus her theatricality in a postmodern theatre of estrangement is also evolving. The directing model of fragmentary technology can be generally defined as the revelation of an anti-causal relationship between the stage action and technology's presence. In practice this means

[453] Ric Knowles, 'The Wooster Group: *House/Lights*, Landscapes and The Politics of Nostalgia', 37.

that the employment of technological factors for constructing stage images and structuring the stage narration gives the impression that technology has no other reference than itself. This directorial strategy often gives the impression of randomness/chance or that the selection of technological elements on stage is arbitrary, something which shocks the audience. The absence of obvious cause, predictability and regularity in the presence and sequence of technologically-generated action on stage causes uncanny effects, leaving the audience uncertain, without clearly understanding the directorial intentions or the directorial meaning. The audience is frequently left with a feeling of incompleteness.

As a result, the LeComptian model of fragmentary technology invites the medialities of fragmentation, deconstruction and multiplication. Fragmentation is an approach characterised by eclecticism, collage, pastiche and juxtaposition of varied technological materials on stage. The LeComptean model of directing with technology has the intention of making the staging of a scene work visually in multi-layered ways. Deconstruction includes the structuring of an anti-diegetic framing through technologically-generated sources. A diegetic framing generated by technology is when the technological sources, whose mechanisms are visible on stage, are presented as originating within the world of the play and, therefore, contributing to the narrative. An anti-diegetic framing is when the presence of technological apparatus is not clearly comprehensible by the audience, producing feelings of estrangement among them. In practice, the process of deconstruction in the work of LeCompte, includes the anti-synergic use of technology on stage to enhance the polarity of common binary opposites

as in human-versus-machine or live-versus-mediatised opposition. In this way, the dichotomy of visual elements that contrast and augment the polarisation denies the traditional role of technology on stage and provides a distorted, subjective point of view.[454]

The multiplication of technological objects, means, forms, designs and media on stage create a dense sign system and innovative structural relationships. LeCompte uses the multiplication of information about space, time, and bodies through multiple audio-visual media, forms and frames to make rhythmic patterns enhancing or sometimes disordering rhythmic mode, tempo and timing. The most important implication for LeCompte's directing is that the dramatic interest is built and sustained through manipulating performance action, mobility and the tempo-spatiality generated by technology. This provides an aesthetic experience and develops specific visual and kinaesthetic responses from the audience. Technological multiplication, has significantly influenced the dynamics of her performances and mediated a constant state of change and disintegration in a way that makes her direction sometimes seem to the audience to be extreme or absurd. In practice, the monopolisation of the stage by a dense system of framings, based on the medialities of technology with the above character, expose artificial means and highlight technological artificiality in the theatre and it is this that causes feelings of estrangement among the audience.

[454] Which is mainly to serve directing to mediate the meaning of the play.

The theory of the theatre of estrangement with its alienation mechanism has its foundations in the theatre of Brecht. The process of the alienation effect includes strange theatrical phenomena that force the spectator to adopt a critical distance from the spectacle. In LeCompte's directing, at first, technology functions anti-synergically and elements seem to develop an autonomous character free of their causalities, orderliness, original functions or meanings and that they are able to provide unstable arbitrary meanings for the play or a post-commentary reflecting on its themes and ideas. This is an evolution of Brecht's radical separation of elements. It involves a more sophisticated critical distance and awareness of the several media that are coming together. Then the medialities of technology shift to deconstruction and in the case of *Hamlet* to the hyper-linking principle. It clearly focuses on the intellect rather than theatrical tradition. If expectations have already been raised among the audience about the meanings of the production or the realistic acting then their confrontation with LeCompte's directing has proven to be problematic. By comprehending the model's aesthetics and understanding details about the role of the technicians, the borrowing of media practices, techno-acting and her other choices it can be argued that the medialities of technology have a critical impact on her theatricality.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have historicised and contextualised LeCompte's practice in order to identify continuities in her directing. Specifically, I have demonstrated her directorial development within her company, the Wooster Group and discussed the use of constant

elements in her work such as: the formulation of a deconstructive acting style and techno-iconography that mediate the deconstruction of presence, the aesthetics of a polysemic production style, and the aesthetics of the negation/resistance. These foundations helped me to identify the shift of her directorial role via the medialities of an additional essential element, technology. I have demonstrated the turning points in her directing in relation to the concept of fragmentary technology to identify the development of her directorial role. I examined her earlier production of *Brace Up!* which prepared the ground for a shift in her directing. Then I identified the three basic characteristics of fragmentary technology and I focused on specific scenes of the performance *Hamlet* that illustrated the key theoretical points. Finally, I linked the above with the production of a specific theatricality that manifest a post-Brechtian aesthetic of a theatre of estrangement.

Particularly, in *Hamlet,* as I have already demonstrated, there was critical consideration of the crucial relationship between live acting and recorded performance. An exciting historical moment was created and LeCompte, as Werner notes, created 'a psychograph of the way that performance moves outside itself'.[455] As a result, the question is no longer that of ownership or authenticity, as in the workings of multi-mediality, but that of storage, transcoding, distribution and the role of the dramatic performance in information culture. By using a digital archive (database in the age of digital reproduction) as an essential part of the performance, LeCompte reconsidered and reinterpreted the work of dramatic-live performance by highlighting 'its critical

[455] Werner, 'Two Hamlets': 325.

relationship to recorded performance', or else created a type of simulation of the living theatre history.[456] Here she made a clear movement from multi-mediality to the sphere of inter-mediality.

In LeCompte's fragmentary technology the audience is fully aware of the technicians on and off stage during the whole performance. As a result, distinctive or unusual dramatic effects are conveyed by the technicians' presence. Technicians are presented as autonomous, self-sufficient and able to interact with the performers in a way that distracts the audience's attention from the narrative, interrupting the play's immediacy. The medialities of the actor in LeCompte's acting-system, are conveyed to another medium, in this case to the technician or the technology-based operations. Gradually, a shift in the medialities of the technology-based collaborators seems to have taken place with great implications for LeCompte's directing.

Another example of the features of a fragmented technology in LeCompte's directing was the development of techno-acting, which included the employment of different styles of acting, reporting, soap opera acting, chat-show representations, or just simple reading and the employment of a cyborg post-humanist visual codification of the actor. Additionally, the juxtaposition of the live and the recorded with the aid of technology magnified the deconstruction of presence/acting. This was LeCompte's cyborg theatre and the development of her directorial notion of the resistance of presence. The live actors seemed to be isolated from their mediatised selves. Their

[456] W. B. Worthen, 'Hamlet at Ground Zero', 310. This also reflects Auslander notion of 'liveness'.

visual disembodiment through the video screens mediated the notion of a fragmented personality, the formation of a self-conflicted human-machine identity. The actor became a reproduction, defined by the 'impossibility of impersonation'. With these choices the director imposed a kind of anaesthesia as a dramatic effect. Additionally, the presence of several video monitors placed above the audience and being visible to only the actors, allowing them to see the images and to synchronise their actions with the video, enhances the notion of an alienating type of techno-acting, in which technology seem to formulate even the method of theatre acting. From the immediacy of the actor's experience to the development of a deconstruction of presence a shift in the actors' roles seems to have taken place as LeCompte developed her ideas.

The medium of TV was used extensively by LeCompte as a type of visual narration. She identified particular moments and situations derived from the text or from stage actions to emphasise a televisual atmosphere and structure. For example, the LeComptean model includes extremely quick cuts between different locations, the use of a set design continuously in motion, the depiction of the story in different chronological moments, and the presentation of live visual compositions as if they were being produced through a TV movable camera or studio post-production editing. All these follow the principles of fragmented televisual storytelling.

Through these techniques she gives the impression of sharing a subjunctive/distorted point of view with the audience related to the stage action. She also uses extensively TV monitors scattered on stage or sharp pre-recorded or live-

generated sounds that continuously interrupt the action to show a parallel activity of the technological agents. By dividing the stage into an 'everywhere-at-once place' and 'a series of nowhere-at-all' through the presence of the monitors and 'video placelessness', as Phaedra Bell has suggested, it is evident that theatricality in LeCompte's work is that of a post-theatre of estrangement which promotes feelings of displacement.[457]

In this chapter, I have argued that the presence of technology seems to be more in control of LeCompte's stage action. By reversing theatrical hierarchies, such as the traditional superiority of the actor or the play, technology has ceased to be a marginally-limited theatrical tool in her directing and significantly influenced her aesthetics. LeCompte has created her own unique iconography by comprising a whole series of images explored in previous theatrical pieces. These restated images are constituted through the iconography of pre-existing techniques of study and analyse the texts, as well as, the Wooster Group's performers' experience of rehearsing. These images are largely displayed through the method of mediatisation and, therefore, the extensive use of technology in LeCompte's fragmentary technology. The most important implication of this practice is that the mediated images frequently de-authorize the classical texts and the performer's aura or presence. Le Compte, in effect, de-mythologises theatre history.

The iconography of a technological cemetery prevails in LeCompte's work of fragmentary technology through the presence of dead old technologies including

[457] Phaedra Bell, 'Fixing the TV', 567-568.

print/writing, photography, analogue film, pre-digital TV, and tape recording, which seem to be recycled and blended with the new technologies. This visual techno-topography presents phantasms of the past that seem to haunt the new generation of theatre practitioners (acts of surrogation). In this way, elements emerged of the new generation, within a post-postmodern urban culture, seem to coexist with the relics of past traditions. This directorial strategy breaks the continuity of the illusionistic-realistic action; it reveals representational instabilities and negates prefixed and unified aesthetical positions.

LeCompte's intention to work with the aesthetics of the televisual and the media, which has remained remarkably consistent during her career as a director, has significantly shifted to an investigation of digital aesthetics and the effects of new media (hyper-media). The power of the electronic image to degenerate the authenticity of the live or the recorded presence has proved to be compatible with her directorial intention not only to render meaning to new emerging art forms that are having significant cultural impact today, but also has contributed significantly to an evolution of the aesthetics of the techno-cemetery, implicating the role of the new technologies (such as in the case of the digital archive). LeCompte's use of digital aesthetics is clearly related to her intention to investigate the visualisation of the spectacle, the ephemera, the manipulation of the digital image, the merger of different media on stage and how this has transformed the perception of modern audiences.

LeCompte has been fed and freed by new technology, which has encouraged her to investigate new areas and ways of exploiting the notion of de-mythologising theatre history. Technology has allowed her a much greater flexibility in the shaping of this type of production, by shifting the emphasis onto the idea of the performance process and raising questions about authenticity, of what is authentic and what is artificial (a replica) in the theatrical environment and what are the dramatic effects produced. As a result, the manifestation of an evolutionary trajectory-movement from the notion of mediality to the notion of multi-mediality and inter-mediality in LeCompte's directing, under the prism of a theory of a directing model of fragmentary technology, is supported. At the same time this shows how she developed as a director and how her practice evolved from the simple use of sound-images to communicate 'restored behaviour', to the full exploitation of multi-mediality, then the process of reconstruction and, the final phase in her development, of presenting the mediatised on stage, and the live and the mediatised in juxtaposition.

CHAPTER THREE: ROBERT LEPAGE AND TOTALISING TECHNOLOGY

This chapter examines the role of technology in the developmental identity of the theatre director Robert Lepage. It critically traces how Lepage incorporated technology in order to answer his questions about theatrical form and elucidates the way in which his directing with technology has given rise to a particular model, the model of 'totalising technology'. I will provide an explanation for the term 'totalising technology' later in the chapter. The chapter identifies how the more technology contributed to the evolution of his stage language, the more his role as a director developed too. Importantly, Lepage promoted the notion that the use of technology in directing would create a change in the way theatre is made and perceived. He shares this belief with other theatre directors, such as LeCompte, who are significantly developing the element of technology in the theatre, and who is discussed in the previous chapter. The foundation of his idea is that the symbiosis between different media and the incorporation of new technologies in the theatre create a new form of theatrical art, which in turn changes the stage language by producing dramatic effects, making use of hybrids of theatrical and technological agents. This chapter establishes an argument in the relationship between directing and technology and proposes that a conscious shift occurs in the directorial role through the continuous medialities of technology used as a directorial strategy.

In this chapter, after a brief introduction to Lepage's history, ideology and aesthetics, I will examine the continuities, the moments of rupture and the turning points in Lepage's directorial style, first by referring to his production of *Elsinore* (1996), which prepared the ground for a shift in his directing. Then, I will examine the three characteristics of the model of directing with technology, which I can clearly discern in the work of Lepage. The first concerns the evolution of the role of the technology-based collaborators, who are not only visible on stage, but also formulate an organic part of the stage action and production as performers; secondly, there is evidence of an evolution caused by the use of cinematic and computer science techniques and finally Lepage establishes a distinctive style by fully amalgamating his actors' technique with technology. The case study follows, which is a close reading of the performance of *Lipsynch* (2007, 2008) and focuses on the scenes that illustrate the three key characteristics. After that, I will proceed to examine the concept of totalising technology by linking Lepage's directorial trajectory to his theatricality which is interwoven with discourse in a post-Wagnerian aesthetic of total theatre. These findings will justify my hypothesis that the Lepagean model of directing provides conceptual information about directing models with technology, and that its use developed his own directorial role.

I attended the Newcastle rehearsal cycle for two days at Northern Stage in 2007. The improvised material was reworked and tested in front of an audience. The performance was scheduled to last for five hours, but by the time that I arrived there the stage manager announced that Lepage had decided to add one more hour, indicating in this way that the performance was continuously under development. I filled in the

questionnaire handed out by Lepage and his theatre company contributing in this way to the process as an active audience and having the unique opportunity to help the shaping of a future performance. Finally, I watched the premiere at the Barbican in September 2008, where the performance had become a nine-hour piece, after a series of cycles (Québec in 2005/6, Newcastle, Tenerife and Montreal in 2007, London 2008). Audio-visual material of past productions has been also used.

BACKGROUND, IDEOLOGY AND AESTHETICS

In this section I analyse Lepage's history, ideology and aesthetics in order to identify continuities in his directing. Specifically, I will examine his acting background and training, and his directorial development within the company Théâtre Repère (founded in 1984), with which he worked prior to the foundation of his own company Ex Machina (founded in 1994), as his experience there was a determining factor and artistic influence. Then, I will briefly examine continuities in his directing which are displayed by his constant use of certain themes and techniques. From this historical trajectory we can trace how Lepage's style has developed as an example of a director's theatre. An analysis of these aspects of his work further helps in contextualising the effects of the medialities of technology in his directing.

Lepage's training as an actor began at the Conservatoire de Musique et d'Art Dramatique du Québec.[458] It was based on the typical methodology of Stanislavsky and Strasberg, techniques which are rooted in psychological realism, according to which acting revolves around the text and the psychology of the character, and is developed by engaging the actor in tasks. On leaving the Conservatoire, Lepage attended the Institut de la Personnalité Créatrice in Paris under the direction of Alain Knapp.[459] There he explored improvisation techniques, Knapp's notion was of the actor as the 'author-creator' of the performance text rather than merely an interpreter of a playwright's text and included Brechtian techniques.[460] Lepage says this about his training at Knapp's institute:

> Knapp's work was very exacting, very difficult to grasp and demanded a poetic abandon that very few people could deliver. The work of the actor-creator, as he conceived of it, was a little like squeezing a lemon to get its juice. ... For Knapp, my reserve and control allowed me to act better, to tell my story better. So his workshops showed me I was on the right track, even if I still hardly knew what that track was. I had been rebuked at the Conservatoire for my reserve but, because he saw its value, Knapp was suddenly allowing me to use it.[461]

Lepage's acting style really began to evolve only as he gradually took into consideration new material factors, such as the design of the performance space, lighting and sound,

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[458] For an extensive cultural and artistic biography of Robert Lepage see Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *Robert Lepage* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 1-25.

[459] Alain Knapp's creative process underlined the performer's impulse to become a total author, an 'actor-creator' of a performance text, through improvisations and grounding the text in the body. The aim was to express the actors' personal creativity and imagination (evoking energy and emotions) free of prefixed narratives and genres, exploring possibilities, without immediately seeking any specific results. For more on Alan Knapp and his method see Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *The Theatricality of Robert Lepage* (Montreal, Kingston, London and Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 48-52.

[460] Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces: Shakespeare reworked by Peter Brook, Robert Lepage and Robert Wilson* (New York: Continuum, 2001), 253.

[461] Rémy Charest and Robert Lepage, *Connecting Flights*, trans. Wanda Romer Taylor (London: Methuen, 1997), 152.

the physical creative interaction between performer and objects, the role of movement and staging gesture, as well as avant-garde theatre techniques, such as the 'reserve and control' acting system and training method (that reflects on Brecht's alienation effect).[462]

From 1984 to 1991, Lepage worked as a performer and director in the theatre company *Théâtre Repère* in Québec,[463]producing and devising collective pieces based on the American choreographer Anna Halpin's method, the 'RSVP Cycles'.[464] The RSVP initials, as Dundjerović has demonstrated, stand for: Resources (emotional and physical material of the actor), Scores (scenes), Valuaction (to look for 'value' in the 'action') and Performance (creation through improvisations). These elements work in a 'cyclical' exchange during the creation process.[465] In this experimental theatrical environment Lepage developed the acting system that would significantly influence his directing style.

Some of the techniques which Lepage used consistently were taken from Halprin's method which created a greater interaction between the performer and the theatrical environment using movement in order to develop a narrative. He developed

[462] For these techniques, such as the object-play, and how it can be used in rehearsals see Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *Robert Lepage*, 89-141.
[463] With the director Richard Fréchette and Jacques Lessard, Marie Brassard, and Michel Bernatchez.
[464] For the RSVP Cycles see Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *Robert Lepage*, 16; Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *The Theatricality of Robert Lepage*, 29-33; Helene Beauchamp, 'The Repère Cycles: From Basic to Continuous Education', *Canadian Theatre Review* 78 (Spring, 1994): 26-31. For more on the influential dancer choreographer Anna Halprin and her practices (devised performance) of using movement and somatic actions within community social-based contexts see Libby Worth and Helen Poynor, *Anna Halprin* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004); Janice Ross, *Anna Halprin: Experience as Dance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).
[465] Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *The Theatricality of Robert Lepage*, 29-33.

the idea that one movement flows from the other so that it is a sequence and the notion that each performer establishes a personal reference point ('inner resource' as a form of a postmodern self-referentiality) using words songs or objects as resource materials. Another influence which deeply affected Lepage's work was the Théâtre Repère's method of using the rehearsal process and the final performance as a resource for a new cycle and to devise a new performance.[466] As Libby Worth and Helen Poynor have pointed out, Halprin and Théâtre Repère's methods have contributed to Lepage's work 'with continuously evolving performances based, in part, on audience response.' [467]

His style, as developed at that time, was a combination of physical theatre, an interrelation between the human body, the space, objects, spoken word, and a postmodern performance, in terms of textual openness, obsessive exploration of the mechanisms of representation and its limits, as well as challenges to traditional theatrical modes of acting.[468] For example, Lepage also experimented in manipulating a mixture of visual imagery, stage narration based on movement's flow and situational emotions, which would produce feelings of anger, sadness, or fear especially when they reflected autobiographic memories, such as the childhood memories of the stage character.

While working with Théâtre Repère, Lepage began his first experiment with multimedia in productions such as: *Vinci* (1987), *Dragons' Trilogy* (1987), *Polygraph*

[466] Ibid, 32. This seems to reflect to LeCompte's postmodern idea of 'recycling'.
[467] Worth and Poynor, *Anna Halpin*, 40.
[468] 'Physical theatre' is a general term which describes a mode of performance that is based primarily on the physicality of the actors. For more on this see Appendix B.

(1989), and *Tectonic Plates* (1990). Finally, in 1994, he founded his own company Ex Machina, in Québec, and started to engage more intensively with a methodology, which was characterised by high technology and multidisciplinary performance, for example mixing opera singers with puppeteers, and computer designers with video artists. This signified a major shift in the development of his directing, one which I will analyse in detail after a brief commentary on the major prevailing directorial Lepagean characteristics in his work with Ex Machina.

Lepage began to directed productions which he wrote alone or wrote collectively with his group of actors and adopted/developed further practices akin to an experimental theatre, such as devising theatre practices.[469] He started to have a long rehearsal process, which could last for months or even years. For example, the preparation for *Lipsynch* (Newcastle cycle 2007, London cycle 2008) lasted for two years.[470] The final production of exceedingly complex performances became epic marathons that could last for more than 9 hours.[471] In addition, he planned for his theatre to be an international theatre (based on the exchange among differently geographical-based artists), achieved either by collaborating with artists from all over the world or by addressing international audiences, in Canada, US, Europe, Australia and Japan.

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[469] For example one of Lepage's standard rehearsing techniques based on devised theatre is an exercise that involves his actors sketching images of the play with magic markers on sheets of paper. For more on this practice and others see Christopher Innes, 'Puppets and Machines of the Mind: Robert Lepage and the Modernist heritage,' *Theatre Research International* 30.2 (2005): 125.

[470] For more on the process as well as the practice of open rehearsals see Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, 'Robert Lepage and Ex Machina: Lipcynch (2007) Performance Transformations and Cycles,' in *Making Contemporary Theatre* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 160-179.

[471] As in Lipsynch or in other epics, such as *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* (1994), *Tectonic Plates* (1988) and *The Dragon's Trilogy* (1987).

One of the ways he sought to achieve internationalisation (exchange on a world scale) was by means of multi-lingualism and multi-culturalism.[472] In his practice he connected his characters around the globe, through different continents, languages and epochs presenting a blend of French, English, German, Spanish, and Chinese characters as symbols of linguistic, geographical and cultural boundaries. He also collaborated with performers and troupes from diverse countries creating multi-racial casts. His artistic policy was to prepare spectacles that would be presented via international touring. On stage, he conveyed his idea of the plurality of human cultures, identities, and histories, of a postmodern, globalised society which argued for global unity without linguistic, geographical and cultural limitations. This was a Lepagean type of intetextuality. Multi-lingualism and multi-culturalism became one of Lepage's most significant directorial trademarks.

Lepage's productions contained purposely designed *coups-de-théâtre*, a surprising turn, a reversal, a revelation or an unexpected and sensational event: an attraction, which happens in the course of the action that is organically within the action and suddenly marks a dramatic change in the situation of the characters.[473] A puzzled feeling of surprise was also generated by a visual metamorphosis connecting poetics, dramaturgical ideas, and emotions. Spectators found themselves caught unawares by powerful visual imagery and stage effects, which instilled in them a sense of awe. Dundjerović asserts that 'it is technology - in its fullest sense - as much as the actor that

[472] A considerable amount of literature has been published on multi-culturalism, internationalism and politics in Lepage's work. For examples see the Bibliography section of this thesis.
[473] French: coup, stroke + de, of + théâtre, theater.

constitutes the magic of Lepage's theatricality.'[474] Therefore, by combining for example, innovative kinetic scenery, imaginative object theatre, ingenious use of projection, and the inventive use of hi-tech hardware and 'gadgetry'. Lepage's directing achieved a maximum effect on the audience. Lepage says:

> Everything begins with the text. But I find myself more than ever returning to the idea of the theatre as a meeting place for architecture, music, dance, literature, acrobatics, play, and so on. In all my shows this is what has interested me most of all: gathering artists together, combining different styles and disciplines.'[475]

Consequently, Lepage's productions turned into a celebration of a theatre which empowered imagination and creativity by openly acknowledging the appealing dramatic effects of the *coup-de-théâtre* via transformational playing and the use of striking technology-based imagery. This type of theatre understandably provoked comment, which in the case of Lepage's productions, has been frequently compared with magic shows and his directing has been regularly described as 'techno-wizardry'.[476] The successful medialities of the techniques of his total theatre, gained him the accolades of 'a consummate talent', a 'theatrical magician' and 'spell-binder'.[477]

Lepage's theatre often emphasised the poetical elements of theatrical directing. This was expressed at multiple levels: firstly with the use of technology as a means for

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[474] Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *The Theatricality of Robert Lepage*, 37.
[475] Rémy Charest and Robert Lepage, *Connecting Flights*, 26. Several times a link has been identified between Lepage and Svoboda's interest in dynamic polyscenicness. See also Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 51-71 and Christopher Baugh, *Theatre Performance and Technology*, 82-93.
[476] Georgina Brawn, 'Elsinore,' *Mail on Sunday* (Jan. 5, 1997), reproduced in London Theatre Record, 17: 1/2 (Jan. 1-28, 1997): 15.
[477] See also characterisations of Lepage such as 'the first 'Martian' theatre director.' Ian Shuttleworth, 'The Seven Streams of the River Ota,' *Financial Times* (Sept. 24, 1996), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 16: 19 (9-22 Sept, 1996): 1195.

the creation of *coups-de-théâtre* through transformational effects, secondly with the theatrical space as a medium which functioned as a metaphorical space, and, finally, with the actor's actual body as a medium of scoring mental-emotional-related to psychology expression. The theatrical narrative in Lepage's productions can be traced back to epic poetry and, as he has claimed, to the 'camp-fire traditions of storytelling'.[478] Lepage's productions deployed traditional notions of theatrical aesthetics and dramatic narrative, something that caused him to be described as 'a very traditional theatre-maker' by the former director of the National Theatre of the UK, Richard Eyre.[479]

However, critics, scholars and audiences have been divided over Lepage's productions. Half of them have been upset with the extensive use of technology and the other half has been thrilled. 'If you want to see a truly pretentious, self-indulgent bit of theatre, hurry to the Cottesloe' says Malcom Rutherford.[480] 'One of the world's leading theatre-makers at the peak of his powers' says Richard Loup-Nolan.[481] Those who support Lepage's directing have asserted that the impact and the consequences for theatrical art tend to invigorate rather than do harm. 'His gifts are less intellectual than

[478] Rémy Charest and Robert Lepage, *Connecting Flights*, 124.
[479] 'Directors: Stephen Daldry, Nicholas Hytner, and Robert Lepage,' *Platform Papers*, No. 3 (London: Publications Department of the Royal National Theatre, 1993), 23-41.
[480] Malcom Rutherford, 'Needles and Opium,' *Financial Times*, May 2, 1992, reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 12: 9 (22 April - 2 May, 1992): 523.
[481] Richard Loup-Nolan, 'A Dream Play,' *Independent*, May 28, 1995, reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 15: 11 (21 May - 3 June, 1995): 716-717.

intuitive - and really why not?' says Benedict Nightingale.[482] Lepage responds to this by saying:

> We have to create a coherent world, a coherent environment from which the audience takes what it wants. This is not what I'm criticized for when I'm told that my shows are bad. And some of my shows are bad. That's perhaps what disappoints me most in reviews. They write that the actors aren't good, or that I'm a spoilt child playing with my toys. But they don't see that a bad show is bad because of its lack of coherence and fundamentally that has nothing to do with the choice of actors or the use of technology.[483]

At the heart of this statement is the suggestion that technology has equal potential to contribute to the success of his directing as acting does, an indication of how inseparable they are in his creativity. In relation to my investigation, which seeks to establish an argument based on the relationship between directing and technology, I suggest that Lepage created spectacles that were designed to wed technology with the aesthetic principles of total theatre under the cultural logic of postmodernism. Lepage has shown a passion for and a persistence in exploring the synergy between various media, multiple artistic disciplines and technology. He has used a range of different technological tools that draw, for example, on new digital technologies in order to produce original, creative content. Lepage says:

> The idea was to work with artists who are interested in squeezing the soul of technology. … We were wondering how to connect poetics and dramaturgical ideas and heartfelt emotions with the new tools we have around. … Technology comes in with a new vocabulary, and we're still stuttering, trying to figure out

[482] Benedict Nightingale, 'Needles and Opium', *The Times*, May 2, 1992, reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 12: 9 (22 April - 2 May, 1992): 522-523.
[483] Rémy Charest and Robert Lepage, *Connecting Flights*, 167.

> exactly how to use it. … I'm still very interested in theatre, except that I have the impression that it changes when it bumps into other mediums [sic].[484]

What is important here is that Lepage's directing promotes the notion that the medialities of technology, as stimuli, will allow a change in the way theatre is made and perceived, a belief he shares with other theatre directors who are coping with technology, such as LeCompte, and thus, according to my argument, this must shift the directorial role to accommodate these applications.

In this section of the chapter related to history, ideology and aesthetics I have examined Lepage's practice in order to identify continuities in his directing. The turning point in his directing can be identified by his shift from canonical theatrical practices, such as the shift from the Conservatoire's acting system to a physical theatre, and to the use of multimedia in the 1980's within the historicity of postmodern theatre. Multimedia was exemplified by cinematic qualities in his directing and by his reliance on a range of collaborators who were experts on technological issues which I will analyse in detail in the following sections.

PERFORMANCE THAT PREPARED THE GROUND FOR THE TURNING POINT

In an examination of continuities in Lepage's directing, I have already discussed his preference for an anti-psychological, physically-based mode of acting, which emphasised gesture and his interest in the creation of a post-Wagnerian total theatre

[484] Don Shewey, 'A Symbolic Nation Aspires to the International: A Bold Quebecois Who Blends Art With Technology', *New York Times* (Sept. 16, 2001).

though striking visuals and theatrical transformations. In this section, I will demonstrate how Lepage, while directing the play *Elsinore*, made extensive use of multimedia technology and how this significantly affected his directorial style and developed his directorial identity. I will also investigate how the technological facts and properties can be identified as intrinsic to the development of Lepage's directorial theatre.

Elsinore, which opened in 1995 in Quebec, was an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and toured Quebec, the USA and Europe.[485] In 1997, the revised production featuring Peter Darling, toured in North America and Europe.[486] *Elsinore* was a performance that celebrated the directing style that Lepage had become famous for: it was a multi-disciplinary artistic work which revealed the power of theatrical visual transformation with the aid of the latest technology. The famous Shakespearian play *Hamlet*, written between 1599 and 1601, recounts how the Danish Prince Hamlet exacts revenge on his uncle Claudius for murdering his father, the king, and succeeding to the throne by marrying Hamlet's mother Gertrude. It has, since then, become one of the most famous and greatest plays with a long tradition of performance.[487] It is no surprise then that a director such as Lepage expressed an interest in staging this play. Lavender

[485] *Elsinore*. Adapted by Robert Lepage from William Shakespeare's Hamlet. Dir. Robert Lepage. Ex Machina. Royal National Theatre, Lyttleton, London. 4 - 11 January 1997. Performance.
[486] '*Elsinore* evolved considerably over the several years of its existence: when it first opened in Montreal, it was over three hours long, while the version with Darling lasted one hour and forty-five minutes. Lepage continued to tinker with the show (particularly its opening moments) even as Darling toured with it, so that the version performed in Ottawa in September 1997 ended up differing significantly from that seen in New York and Dublin only months later ...'. Karen Fricker, 'Robert Lepage', in: *The Routledge Companion to Director's Shakespeare*, ed. John Russell Brown (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 245-246.
[487] For more on the history of *Hamlet*'s productions see William Shakespeare, and Robert Hapgood, ed. *Hamlet: Shakespeare in Production* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

notes that *Elsinore* had as its ambition for 'Shakespeare to be seen differently.'[488] Consequently, Christopher Innes argues that 'the crux of the production concept was the enactment and delivery of the character's internal life via staging effects, many of them imposingly technical in nature.'[489]

In this production, Lepage presented an important multi-medial work demonstrating the development of his role as a director. By placing the audience inside the character's mind and, mediating the character's inner life, he displayed what was to be one of his directorial trademarks: the extensive use of multimedia technology. But by 1995 there had been substantial innovations and changes in the technological medialites open to him and it was necessary that his director's skills grew similarly in order to match these changes in technology. In the programme, Lepage states that: '...technology available to me this time has enabled me to 'X-ray' certain passages of *Hamlet,* and while the action apparently takes place only in the protagonist's head, it occasionally has the look of an electro-encephalogram'[490] describing in this way the production as an electronic mapping of Hamlet's brain surface. Lavender argues that this *mise en scene* 'elaborates the discursive nature of *Hamlet* with ideas of personal, psychological and political disturbance and the potency, or otherwise, of individual agency, and the turbulence of illicit action.'[491]

[488] Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 102.
[489] Karen Fricker, 'Robert Lepage', 246.
[490] *Elsinore*, Programme note reprinted in Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 227.
[491] Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 107-108.

First, Lepage turned his attention to acting and its integration with technology: *Elsinore* was a one-man show with Lepage playing all the characters. Lepage's performance was solo but he was never on stage alone as *Elsinore* also featured the appearance of Pierre Bernier, a Quebecois mime performer, as a double.[492] Lepage's transitions between Hamlet, Claudius, Gertrude and the other characters were aided by video and slide projection. Thus, technology helped Lepage to handle the problems posed by a solo performance.[493] At this point there was a clear link between Lepage's directing and the theatrical historical avant-garde.[494] From the point of view of using the medialities of technology Giesekam also argues that:

> ... in this production perhaps more than any other, his idea of the actor as machine and machine as actor came to the fore. Watching, it was at times difficult to decide whether the actor was under the control of the machine or vice-versa ... for all that the production became, at one level, a display of the performer's 'acrobatic' virtuosity in working with the technology, at times he seemed to be dominated by the blocking demands of the live recording.[495]

Through the multiplication of romantic-idealistic-dreamy iconic presentations of the Shakespearean hero (the appearance of Lepage's character of Hamlet with a 'full-flowing white shirt, black breeches tucked into black leather boots, a long dark wig and

[492] 'There's always someone else, like when you've got shadows of hands, it will be the hands of the second performer. This shadow presence gives the lie to the understandable misconception, voiced in one preview piece, that Lepage 'works best alone' and to the observation that Lepage is 'seul sur scene'. In fact the opposite is true!' Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 109. See also Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 241-270.
[493] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 229.
[494] For Giesekam 'the production harked back to Edward Gordon Craig's notion of playing Hamlet as a monodrama, in which other characters are effectively figures inside Hamlet's head, and Lepage's use of mobile screens even contained distant echoes of Craig's 1912 Moscow production.' Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 228.
[495] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 230.

closely trimmed goatee')[496] as basic visual references presented live or projected on the screens, Lepage managed to create a unified interpretation and totality in his directing. In this way, he echoed modernist conceptions on drama and acting, such as presenting '*Hamlet* as monodrama' or presenting the actor as a machine as Craig has developed in his theory on the Übermarionette.[497] But beyond that, Lepage adopted a post-Wagnerian staging rhetoric since technological virtuosity gave the impression of 'dominating' an actor's performance, the machine as actor, shifting this practice to an allegory of the human-machine discourse.

The technicalities of staging *Elsinore* were considerable: the set designer Carl Fillion featured a basic scenographic element which was called 'the monolith'. There were three plane surfaces connected to a set of motors, one facing the audience and the other two angled on either side. It contained a revolving circular disc in the middle of the flat surface facing the audience which could revolve and within this was a further removable rectangular opening panel about the height of a man, like a hole, or portal.[498] Supported by four industrial aircraft wires held at its four corners, the centre panel (5m x 5m steel structure) 'the monolith' could swing into many different configurations in relation to the stage floor. It could be rotated vertically, lifted horizontally, tilted backwards or forwards, stood upright, and slowly flipped through a plane of 180 degrees. It could become a floor, a wall, or a roof and present its front or back to the

[496] Karen Fricker, 'Robert Lepage', 247.
[497] According to Craig's 'Über-Marionette' concept, the actor's personality (traditional Western representational acting) should be replaced by representational gesture. Edward Gordon Craig, 'The Actor and the Über-Marionette', in *The Twentieth-century Performance Reade*r, Michael Huxley and Noel Witts (London: Routledge, 1996), 159-166.
[498] Karen Fricker, 'Robert Lepage', 244.

audience.[499] The open portal, depending on its alignment, operated as a doorway, a window, a table, or a grave. The portal was fitted with mechanical bolts to hold additional scenic tablets. A prototype chair swiveling on the frame was fitted to the set. Lepage in his interview with Richard Eyre had mentioned that: 'That was the only thing I asked for from the set designer. Give me that frame'.[500]

Fillion had been called upon to present all the technical requirements of 'a frame' with the intention of enlarging its symbolism. His technological-multimedia architecture with the complex design of the monolith, mobile screens, videos framing, computational and engineering systems moved towards this directorial logic. Thus, a major shift in Lepage's directing took place as he understood that the effects generated by technology could become the directorial stage dramaturgy leaving the canonical text behind by achieving at the same time a postmodernist decanonising attack on the institution of the theatrical representation. Giesekam argues that 'Lepage saw the monolith as another actor.'[501] In this way Lepage not only embraced Craig's 'Übermarionette' notion, but also moved beyond that by transferring the medialities of the actor to the monolith (a paradigm of transgression).

Two further large mobile screens, one at either side, bordered the monolith. The screens could swing in and back to the edge of the stage that allowed walls to open.

[499] For detailed analysis of the monolith see Andy Lavender, Hamlet in Pieces, 103-104. See also variations of kinetic scenery in Lepage's productions: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1992), *A Dream Play* (1995), and *Elsinore* (1997).
[500] Lepage and Eyre (1997). In: Karen Fricker, 'Robert Lepage', 244.
[501] Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen*, 230.

When the monolith was vertical and aligned with the screens, together they became a projection surface with dimensions similar to that of a cinema screen. *Elsinore* featured Lepage's favourite multimedia technology, the moving screen, 'but in more technically sophisticated configurations' according to Lavender.[502] Lepage used extensive visuals related to the historical heritage of western visual culture. For example, the projection of images to frame Hamlet's speech 'What a piece of work is man'[503] included Eadweard Muybridge's serial photographs of a running man[504] and Leonardo Da Vinci's famous anatomical drawing of the male form encompassed by a circle.[505] Kate Taylor of the Toronto *Globe and Mail* observed that:

> Lepage delivered the speech, not in its dramatic context, as the counterpoint to Hamlet's increasing cynicism about existence, but rather in its historical one as one of Western civilization's great monuments of rational humanism.[506]

Fricker adds:

> Many critics commented that someone who did not know Shakespeare's play would have difficulty following the performance, but Lepage's point, clearly, was that it would be hard to find an audience member who didn't know the story of Hamlet, or have some sort of mythology built up about the character.[507]

[502] Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 103.
[503] William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet*, Prince of Denmark, Act II, scene 2, lines 285-300.
[504] For Muybridge's photos see Eadweard Muybridge and Hans Christian Adam, ed., *Eadweard Muybridge. The Human and Animal Locomotion Photographs* (Köln et al.: Taschen, 2010).
[505] The 'Vitruvian Man' by Leonardo da Vinci (circa 1487).
[506] Kate Taylor, 'Dancing Exuberantly on Hamlet's Grave,' *The Globe and Mail* (Nov. 15, 1995), quoted in Steen and Werry, 'Bodies, Technologies and Subjectivities', 149.
[507] Karen Fricker, 'Robert Lepage', 246.

On this basis, Lavender is right to assert that 'The text, then, is not the starting-point but the endpoint of production.'[508] Lepage's main idea from the beginning was that the play 'be seen differently' by the audience. The Shakespearean text and dramaturgy became the 'endpoint' for his ideas and not the 'starting point' as one might expect in the theatre, and his skills supported a more conceptual approach, challenging audience interpretative preconceptions about the traditional or modernist representations of the canonical play.[509] Thus, the famous play was chosen to be staged as an allegory of the formalistic directing itself within the workings of postmodernism.[510] Lepage's directorial practice certainly has given the impression that 'a resistant' or 'deconstructive' performance politics are at play.[511] For Fricker the production's 'extreme decontextualisation by the fact that it was not created in, and did not refer to any contemporary social or political setting other than the space of creativity itself lead to suspicions that the production was complicit with systems of post-industrial capital.'[512] Lepage's directorial system seems to decline the standards and the values of the canonical theatre (resistance, deconstruction, decontextualisation) and, therefore, can be clearly perceived and defined as postmodernist.

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[508] Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 18.
[509] Steen and Werry argue that, 'In his use of multi-media technology, Lepage specifically undermined the generally accepted conventions through which the canonical currency of Shakespeare's play, as the ultimate exploration of individual subjectivity, is expressed.' Steen and Werry, 'Bodies, Technologies and Subjectivities', 144.
[510] According to Harvey, Lepage work is postmodern, since 'textual openness' (multiplicity of meaning permitting multiple readings challenging conventional hierarchies) and 'apolitical' feature (a constant failure of political critique) belong to the postmodern culture. Jennifer Harvie, 'Robert Lepage,' in Johannes W. Bertens and Joseph Natoli, eds. *Postmodernism: The Key Figures* (Malden, Mass. and Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 224-230.
[511] Richard Paul Knowles, 'From dream to machine: Peter Brook, Robert Lepage, and the contemporary Shakespearean director as (post)modernist,' *Theatre Journal* 50:2 (1998), 189-206.
[512] Karen Fricker, 'Robert Lepage', 247.

The production also featured a score and soundscape which were recordings of music, sound effects and the live manipulation of the actor's voice by Robert Caux, a complex lighting design by Alain Lortie and Nancy Mongrain and video projections by Jacques Collin.[513] Lavender says on this: 'Lepage develops his solo shows alongside a design and technical team. The work is still collaborative in important ways.'[514] Lepage not only had developed *Elsinore* in collaboration with his design and technical team, but there was a change in the relationship as Lavender informs us:

> ... each department, sound, lighting, music, multimedia, set-remote-control is responsible for its own cueing and operation, rather than everything being called by the stage manager or deputy stage manager. This is unusual, but it means that each technical element is 'played' by its operator in (ideally) complete synchronicity with the rhythms of any particular performance. It also means that integrated theatre performance, design, and technical operation can be sketched and developed as an entity in the rehearsal room, rather than suffer from the late addition of complicated technical operation.[515]

Only in this way could technology come into play 'as an organic component of the live event.'[516] Technicians assumed an altered role and an altered relationship with the director.

Here, in relation to the focus of this thesis, are the technological means traced in Lepage's performances for which this director is most famous and are the essential components of his transition into directorial totalising technology. Here is displayed the

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[513] 'With the help of amplification we hear his voice not once but twice ...' Alastair Macaulay, 'Elsinore,' *Financial Times* (Jan. 7, 1997), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 17. 1/ 2 (Jan. 1 - 28, 1997): 12.
[514] Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 97.
[515] Ibid, 136-137.
[516] Ibid, 136-137.

mixing of staging gestures and visuals[517] (video and slide projection) on the 20-foot projection screens, inventive live camera projections relay such as the miniature camera,[518] kinetic scenery-the moving monolith, shifting walls and floors of the set, stage machinery, computer-controlled hydraulic systems, swirled computer-controlled pin spots, a moving light, computerised lighting unit that allows you to change focus, intensity, colour and target, and an elaborated sound design.[519] None of these were suggested by the text. His intention was to make technology work in different ways which would be useful in staging specific scenes. As a result, it was the staging itself rather than the play which was 'the thing', reflecting on a postmodern cultural logic (meta-theatre). Shakespeare's text, therefore, was manipulated 'in order to serve the production and effects that Lepage wished to deliver.'[520]

In *Elsinore* extensive use was made of screen projections and kinetic scenery in contrast to the humanity of the performer. Lavender gives an explanation of this:

> The overt use of technology creates a nice tension between the domains of modern machinery (cinema/TV/video) and the live, human performer (theatre). The actor is more vulnerable, as he works within evident parameters set by the machine. But he is simultaneously empowered, since he acts with and for

[517] 'The lights dimmed, the set moved, and the actor reappeared in the chair with the projection of a 'King' playing card around him: he became Claudius, dispatching Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy on Hamlet; and then, with a switch of posture and a change of projection to a 'Queen' card, became Gertrude.' In: Karen Fricker, 'Robert Lepage', 245.
[518] The company mounted the mini-camera on the handle of an epee, an experiment which resulted in the eventual depiction of Hamlet's duel with Laertes and the play's notorious sequence of deaths by way of a huge projection of the view from the duellers' rapiers. Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 105.
[519] 'Prerecorded elements - the Players' rehearsal for example, could be heard below as Hamlet mused about being a 'rogue and peasant slave' on the rooftop above - and manipulated and sampled his own voice.' Steen and Werry, 'Bodies, Technologies and Subjectivities', 141.
[520] Karen Fricker, 'Robert Lepage', 246.

> technology. Apart from riding the set, he relates to the audience by means of performance on stage and to the camera.[521]

As a result the medialities of technology in *Elsinore* represented multiple dualities starting from the machinery-live tension, the actor's vulnerability-empowerment and the stage-camera acting method. For Innes 'all emphasized the mechanical nature of the stage and its status as a symbol of high technology.[522] Lavender resonates with this rationale:

> We watch not only an articulation of Hamlet, but an articulation of the meeting between theatre and electronic technology. The production is about – it stages – the interface between the human and the technological. [523]

Conclusively, the stage narration had the character of presenting parts of the mind of Hamlet. Additionally, for Lavender the stage narration based on technology, such as use of video technology, had the additional functionality of communicating a metatheatrical reflection:

> Lepage's use of video technology is metatheatrical here, too. On a more mundane level, the use of the live camera, snooping and spying, evokes contemporary security-video surveillance and lends a modern texture to the depiction of Hamlet's anxiety.[524]

[521] Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 142.
[522] Christopher Innes, 'Puppets and Machines of the Mind', 132.
[523] Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 143.
[524] Ibid, 143.

Consequently, the use of video technology shifted from a decorative temporal-spatial scenographic element to a 'metatheatrical' element, because it evoked clearly 'a modern texture' of a hero's 'anxiety'.

The overt use of technology permitted Lepage to stage the continual tensions between the human and the machine or between the human and the technological and to question the nature of human beings, contributing to the performance's 'argument' based on hero's mental 'disturbance and turbulence'. The paradox in this directing system with technology, however, was the fact that the actor gave the impression of being more 'vulnerable' and at the same time more 'empowered'. Lepage had to rethink his acting system (action, energy, improvisation for the stage and for the camera) in order to refresh the actors' potential and in doing so to develop his own directorial style.

But what were 'the effects that Lepage wanted to deliver' through the use of technology? Lavender identifies that Lepage in his directing has remained remarkably consistent to the principles of flux and transformation:

> In *Elsinore*, space, as well as personhood, melt in a series of theatrical transformations. This is a place and a set which gradually stamps its own personality: restless, shifting and implacable.[525]

[525] Ibid, 105-106.

Lepage with the above technological means achieved 'spatially disorientating effects'[526] and presented 'a *tour-de-force* of flexibility.'[527] These effects articulated, according to Lavender, a tension:

> *Elsinore* is about instability, about a whirl of activity around a central figure, about continual tensions between a human figure and a piece of machinery which one could express, metaphorically, as a tension between individual and state, or even the human and the cosmic.[528]

However, the director gives a more straightforward explanation of his practice: 'In theatre, the audience has to be immersed in the show's argument, and to be immersed in the argument every sense has to seize it and so the form has to become an incarnation of the subject and themes'.[529]

Lepage's directing with technology had begun to achieve a 'personality', a 'restless, shifting, implacable' directorial identity. The medialities of technology caused a series of effects attributing to a 'show's argument' (the look of an electro-encephalogram). First, movement and transformation were aided significantly by the use of video and slide projections on the mobile screens, as well as the monolith. This resulted in the production of *tour-de-force* kinaesthetic effects, excessive technically sophisticated configurations that enhanced the notions of flexibility and spatiality, which surprised the audience. These contributed to a purpose designed by the director of total theatre, a *coups-de-théâtre*, stemming, however, this time from technology *per se*,

[526] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 355.
[527] Christopher Innes, 'Puppets and Machines of the Mind', 132.
[528] Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 107-108.
[529] Ibid, 108.

indicating his commitment to his new direction. The shift had taken place not only because of the Lepage's undermining of conventions in the theatrical environment, but because of his immersion in technology, something that was perceived as a provocative self-indulgent action.[530] According to Lepage, his directing was intended to 'immerse the audience' as well. All their senses had to 'grasp this argument' (the metaphor of the anxiety in the hero's mind). As a result 'the form' in directorial terms the use of the medialities of technology became an 'incarnation' of the play's themes in the way that machinic-technological vision became Hamlet's vision within Lepage's interpretation, and, therefore, communicated a metatheatrical reflection.

In this section I have demonstrated how Lepage, in his paradigmatic directing of the play *Elsinore* used multimedia technologies. I have clarified the trajectory of his basic directorial characteristics and the *modus operandi* of his directing model with technology, as well as identifying the turning points in the development of his directorial role. The essential directorial principles of Lepage's directing in *Elsinore* had been: a physical-based solo performance with a performer double, the extensive use of kinetic scenery (the monolith and movable screens), and the use of more technically sophisticated projection screens. The dramatic effects produced were: a *tour-de-force* of flexibility and spatiality, the continual tension created between the human figure and machinery, between the human and the technological, as well as the expository of the

[530] '… Lepage wants to do everything, be everyone, monopolise the stage with his antics.' Georgina Brown, 'Elsinore,' *Mail on Sunday* (Jan. 5, 1997), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 17. 1/ 2 (Jan. 1-28, 1997): 15. '… Elsinore shows him indulging in sheer tricksiness and shameless egotism.' Nick Curtis, 'Elsinore,' *Evening Standard* (Jan. 6, 1997), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 17: 1/ 2 (Jan. 1 - 28, 1997): 15.

stage's mechanical/technological nature and, finally, the mediation of action, characters and imagery through the use of technology. The overall dramatic effect established was a mixture of theatrical, machinery and filming functionality in an organic mutual relation that led to a ground-breaking result with a new mixed aesthetics that undermined the generally accepted conventions in the theatre. Here, the influence and characteristics of multi-mediality can be discerned in Lepage's presentation of *Elsinore*.

How the theory of totalising technology is evident in Lepage's model of directing with technology: Three key points

In this section I will identify the key point which characterise Lepage's creation of a totalising technology: first, there is a change in the role of the technology-based collaborators from facilitating the production from the backstage, to their appearance on stage as actors and performers; second, Lepage introduces the practice of incorporating cinematic and computer science techniques in structuring the stage action or else remediation of cinematic and computer techniques; and third, he has developed a situational acting system profoundly amalgamated with technology. All these properties provided Lepage with a framework for developing his style.

Technical managers, technicians and technical operators as performers

The practice of including visible technicians on stage, I suggest, is to invest them with the characteristics and the potential of an actor. The audience is fully aware of the

presence of the technician-operators and there are particular qualities of the performance that are directly linked with the technicians who produce distinctive or unusual dramatic effects and, control the rhythm of the performance (the mimetic medialities/mimesis is mediated to the technicians). As a result, the technicians' presence contributes to the overall theatrical experience. Thus any actor, any technician, and any object including computer software-hardware or other technology-based apparatus visibly on stage, is equally important in the Lepagean directorial system, because all together they seem to support and extend the mediality of the actor's body on stage with the intention of producing emotion. All the activities on stage, however, whether it is moving scenery or operating a camera, sound and lighting equipment, take place without interrupting the action of the play and without the aim of overemphasising the human-mechanic dichotomy in a way that would alienate the audience or challenge their belief.

In comparison to LeCompte's model, Lepage has presented technicians on stage as performers emphasising their role as doubles or as an extension of the actor's body without interrupting the play's dramaturgy, unlike LeCompte who has emphasised the technicians' anti-synergic functionality through disrupting, interpreting and commenting on the play and its characters. Additionally, technicians in Lepagean theatre interact with the performers, physically influencing the stage narration, by transforming the stage scenery in front of the eyes of the audience, but with a pseudo-illusionistic or artificially homogenous quality which is quite the opposite to the effect created by LeCompte.

The mechanics of the stage are not secret or mystical any more, since the audience clearly see all of the apparatus, the mechanism, and the clanking contraption behind it, and the people who operate them. Lepage's treatment is functional, playful, amusing. The technician-operator is an artistic personae and, therefore, as an essential factor in the performance, part of the synergy of the production, as a whole organism and as a total artwork, but within a post-Wagnerian aesthetics sense.

During his career Lepage explored the 'Gesamtkunstwerk' idea in several ways and proved his visual inventiveness through particular semiology. From the transformation of objects as a basic directorial strategy in the 1980s,[531] to the multiple use of the stage set in the 1990s, and the startling cinematic images in the 2000s Lepage has exploited the principles of a post-total theatrical aesthetics, on one hand by being constant in the values of illusion, symbolism and dream and, on the other, by being pioneering in incorporating advanced technology. This was noted by critics after the performance *Needles and Opium* (1992). Michael Billington says:

> In their ability to merge the two-dimensional image and the three-dimensional human shape, Lepage and his stage assistant, Denys Lefebvre, show a skill that makes most theatre look old-fashioned.[532]

Technological changes, the development in tools and materials, directly influence directorial changes as the director exploits new effects. The fact that this incorporation

[531] Rushing, flaming wheelchair meant to symbolise a plane crash in *The Dragon's Trilogy* (1991).
[532] Michael Billington, 'Needles and Opium,' *Guardian* (May 2, 1992), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 12: 9 (2 April - 5 May, 1992): 524-525.

of technology occurs first in Lepage's directorial logic and not afterwards as a polishing element suggests that he fully and totally absorbs technology in his creativity from the outset.

CINEMATIC AND COMPUTER SCIENCE TECHNIQUES IN THE STRUCTURE FOR THE STAGE ACTION

According to the theory of remediation, the content of one medium such as film or computer is always another medium such as stage. Additionally, one can suggest a further application of this theory within the framework of directing that the content of theatre, such as its theatricality through the development of dramatic effects (synergy or anti-synergy), is always another medium, such as in the case of technology and that technology is a form of meta-communication in directing. But what kind of technology is being used by Lepage? Lepage's major scenographic equipment includes a large suspended lycra spandex projection screen with an inclined surface that revolves to create different decorative-architectural visual wall-effects. Onto this are projected images that indicate place and time, or descriptive titles for scenographic purposes, a starry canopy for example.[533] He also uses lit and transparent mirrors, slide projection, video projection, 3D computer graphics/animation, virtual reality design, live streaming

[533] A synthetic fibber known for its exceptional elasticity. It is commonly called 'DJ screen' since it is frequently used by DJs as a portable projection solution. See 'DJ screen', accessed May 20, 2007. <http://www.djscreen.com>.

video, cameras, live computerised treatments of voice and devices, such as the *eclipsis* for blacking out unwanted light from a video projector.[534]

In an attempt to imitate the world of cinema Lepage has used kinetic scenery, flying equipment and the language of film genres to produce visual-dynamic images on stage. He has used the shadows of film noir for lighting the stage or the wide range of 'reprographic media,'[535] or the rapid synchronicity of simultaneously presented scenes to accentuate this cinematic atmosphere and structure. He has used a variety of projection techniques: enlarged images and grotesquely long shadows (in *The Andersen Project*, 2006); the blur of colourless figures inspired by traditional Japanese shadow-play (in *Eonnagata*, 2009); he projected paintings onto the bodies of the performers (in *Elsinore*); there were scene titles and film-like production credits (in *Lipsynch*); and hidden cameras behind the walls (in *Elsinore*). This aesthetic inspiration kept the audience occupied in looking for the next technical dexterity. In this way, the screen becomes the prime source of surprise, questioning and reflecting the gaze of the director which is superimposed on the audience.

Lepage has also employed live streaming cameras on stage informed again by film genres such as enlarged close-ups, freeze-frames, differently angled shots, flash-

[534] 'Eclipsis' was designed be the Ex Machina's research and development department for the sake of Lepage's productions. See 'Ex Machina Web Site', accessed May 20, 2007. <http://lacaserne.net/index2.php/robertlepage>.

[535] Reprography is the reproduction of graphics through mechanical, electrical or digital means. Modern document-reproduction technology (digital duplicators, scanners, laser printers) provide blueprints and renderings, signage, maps, billboards, backlighting displays, medical illustrations, x-rays, etcetera. 'Reprography', *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed October 20, 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/ topic/498682/reprography>.

backs, dissolves, cross-fades, blackout scenes, crosscutting, dream sequences and slow-motion or speeding action. The camera frames these views into compositions and captures things with intensity and density so that the spectator can organise and analyse the data in new ways and engage with multiple readings of the view produced. Therefore, the audience seems to become part of and share this directorial viewing and interpretation connected organically with the subjectivity of the character.[536] In particular, Lepage makes extensive use of the device of framing to contain his stage narrative, to confine and direct his meanings. This notion of framing in the performance space despite the fact that its function is not suggested by the text became one of the main characteristics of Lepage's directorial mode giving the impression that he was sharing a unique point of view with the audience bordering, confining and limiting the meaning of the stage action.

However, the most important effect of visual cinematic grammar for his *mise en scene* is that it evokes a pictorial theatrical aesthetics based on *mechanical reproduction* (echoing Benjamin's term). This is because Lepage subscribes to the idea that the production of theatre is for an audience accustomed to television, cinema and computers. Therefore, technology helps the director to stage a plenitude of effects which are hybrids of old and new media along with dramatic effects. By emphasising the ways in which representations are produced in contemporary visual culture he aims to achieve intimacy through the image. This is his most powerful method of challenging the rules

[536] The subjectivity of the character through the 'camera eye' and the 'montage' has been developed by the filmmaker Sergei Eizensten. *Sergei Eisenstein, Film Form: Essays in Film Theory* (New York: Harcourt Press, 1969).

of canonical theatre making and a clear indication of how far he has embraced technology in his art.

There are also stage images that express something beautiful and enigmatic through visual codes of symbols/metaphors which evoke a poetic reality and emotional intensity. These images have become his directorial trademark and a standard of his distinctive creative directing rooted fundamentally in the use of the conventions of the cinematic medium. The spectator is watching a slowly unfolding dream or a strange, mystic, elusive symbolism in the dream experience reflecting total theatre's major premises.

Through this mode of directing, the sort of transitions between different elements of the performance, text, acting, setting and video projections, are characterised by a fluid interplay throughout the show. This spatial and temporal fluidity seeks to create highly atmospheric, cinematic-related types of representation. In order to achieve this he forms his live visual compositions on stage as if they were being produced through a moving camera or post-production editing. However, there is always a danger of technological display taking over the performance of the actors. But this is the challenge. Lepage's productions have managed to look extremely high-tech and at the same time 'human' because he faithfully follows the principle of producing hybrid dramatic effects and, as a result, a hybrid theatrical aesthetics.

The film or computer generated images seem to provide new spatial possibilities. They can simulate three-dimensional space despite the flatness of the screen and vice versa: the flatness of the screen can provide the totality of the disjointed scenery. As a result, through the variations of camera angles, the perspective and spatiality of the stage seems to be totally transformed.[537] Tracing the historicity of this directorial practice one can refer to the effects of technology on his plays.[538] There are strong contrasts here with the work of LeCompte. Lepage uses the organising principles of media in order to restructure a fantastic plausible totality on the screen exercising in this way a major operating logic of remediation. In contrast, LeCompte highlights the manipulative and re-functioning nature of media for indicating a deconstructive character and prefers TV genres for her inspiration. In terms of aesthetics, Lepage prefers to echo on stage-screen film genres (surrealists, poetic cinema) by borrowing specific techniques from remediating films.

Lepage's increasing use of the aesthetic conventions of film and the medialities of the computer logic and form for structuring the stage action has a significant function for the Lepagean model of totalising technology. As a result, the type of theatricality that is produced by directing and technology evoke not only a cinematic atmosphere informed by film genres and old media, but also exploit the new visual digital grammar

[537] For example in *The Andersen Project* (2005) Lepage jumps into the concave screen, spraying projected figures and giving the impression that he is part of the graffiti illustration. However, the graffiti's spray-can is a computer-generated programme that simulates the distinctive rough edge that graffiti art is famous for. The same notion of the interplay between the three-dimensional space and flatness of the screen is represented in reverse in *Lipsynch*.

[538] For the implications of the digital sceneography see Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 335-512. Mark Reaney, 'The Theatre of Virtual Reality: Designing Scenery in an Imaginary World', *Theatre Design and Technology* 29: 2 (Spring 1993): 29-32.

of new media that provides new temporal-spatial possibilities. The directing model of totalising technology depends on a cause and effect relationship between the stage action and the presence of technology to give the impression of coherence. It is the explicit demonstration and the visual evidence of how the presence of technology drives the stage action and is an integral part of performance. As well as revealing the connection between directing and technology, director's theatre also sheds light on the development of the role of the director. During and after the process, Lepage's directorial skills improved through better understanding, a more active relationship with technology and meticulous observation of how images, the principles of the digital, computerised systems, the digitalised human body and machines behave.

POST-HUMAN IMAGERY AND TECHNO-ACTING

Lepage is an iconocentric director. He has the belief that images are and should be one of the central elements of theatre directing as much as acting and text. As a result, his ideas about the links between acting, visual forms and their content is fundamentally and profoundly connected with his directing. Lepage creates a tension between digital imaging and the actors' corporeality in order to construct a cyborg post-human imagery.

Cyborg is the concept of the human-machine hybrid that challenges assumptions and sutures the boundaries between humans, animals and machines under the terms of

contemporary technoculture.[539] Robot and cyborg presentations according to Dixon and Smith 'belie deep-seated fears and fascinations associated with mechanical embodiments'[540] in relation to two distinct themes 'the humanization of the machines and the dehumanization, or 'machinisation' of the humans.'[541] Dixon and Smith give an interpretation saying that the notion of 'something other' offers 'a potent metaphor'.[542] In the case of Lepage the screen, the virtual reality and the body are all within the same creative and theoretical framework in a way that offers this metaphor. As Birringer has put it the virtual body is a depiction of the 'ideological crisis of the fragmented object', the 'deconstructed and disappearing actor' and the 'creation of new impossible anatomies'.[543] Dixon and Smith also analyse the notion of the 'digital double' drawing on Artaud's 'theatre's double',[544] Freud's theory on the 'uncanny' ('*Unheimlich'*)[545] and Lacan's theory of the 'mirror stage'.[546] For Dixon and Smith the 'digital double' is the alternate and simultaneous second body for the performing subject projected on the screen and which relates to the emergence of the technologised self, the alter-ego, the

[539] Debra Shaw, *Technoculture*, 173. For more on cyborgs see Donna Haraway, 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century', in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Re-invention of Nature* (London: Free Association Books, 1991), 149-181.
[540] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 13 and 303-332.
[541] Ibid, 14.
[542] Ibid, 305.
[543] Johannes Birringer, *Media and Performance: Along the Border* (Battimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 159.
[544] See Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and Its Double*, trans. Mary Caroline Richards (New York: Grove Press, 1994). Antonin Artaud, *Artaud on Theatre*, eds. Claude Schumach and Brian Singleton (London: Methuen Drama, 2001). See also Appendix B.
[545] For more on this see Sigmund Freud,'The Uncanny', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey, vol. XVII (London: Hogarth, 1953), 219-252. See also Appendix B.
[546] Lacan, Jacques. 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience', *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977), 8-29. See also Appendix B.

spiritual emanation/soul, and the synthetic being.[547] This has been explicitly presented in Lepage's directing model, especially in his solo shows, where technology plays the key role.

Matthew Causey analyses the performance of the posthuman, with a focus on Romeo Castellucci's directing, stating that:

> 'The machines' dynamic presence tends to provoke a tension between and suggests an intimate link among the objects and the humans with which they perform.'[548]

He contextualises the performance of the posthuman as a deeply related understanding of human mortality.

> The timelessness of the machine, the inexhaustible performativity of the object, summons forth a revealing of the timed nature and fatigued performance of the human. Mortality is brought back to the stage through the immortal nature of the machine. [549]

According to Causey the posthuman suggests that western industrialized societies are experiencing a new phase of humanity. [550] Causey crucially points out that the ontology of the posthuman includes:

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[547] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 242.
[548] Matthew Causey, 'The Crisis of Creation in Socìetas Raffaello Sanzio's Genesi and Eduardo Kac's Genesis', *Theatre Research International* null.02 (July 2001), 207.
[549] Ibid, 207.
[550] Matthew Causey, *Theatre and Performance in Digital Culture: From Simulation to Embeddedness* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 52.

> The technologies of scientific visualisation of the body through magnetic resonance imaging, the territorialising of the body through genome mapping and genetic engineering, and the alteration of the body through aesthetic and sexual reassignment surgery and mechanical, electronic and biological prosthetics.[551]

This means that a new aesthetic experience is revealed based on the mixed nature of both elements of technology and the human body.

Lepage approaches a cyborg post-human imagery, reflecting on the above theoretical views, by integrating machinery and video as extensions of the performer's body. This practice has potential implications for the theatrical experience, because the somatic framework of the performer merges with the technological framework operating together within a shifting theatrical context. These techniques one can suggest formulate an autonomous theatrical genre, a hybrid which institutionalises the notion of the in-between, of dissolved boundaries between the media, where a substantial crossover takes place: the totalising technology. Lepage says:

> To create a show that's moving, what you need is not to express as much emotion as possible, but to symbolise the emotion, to represent it or to symbolise it. The results are much more enduring and convincing.[552]

In order to 'symbolise emotion' he systematically uses the principles of the metonymical and the metaphorical to tell his stories. By using the metonymical and metaphorical for structuring optic imagery which is amplified by technology, Lepage modifies content and transmutes meaning. The metonymical can be identified in a

[551] Ibid, 52-53.
[552] Rémy Charest and Robert Lepage, *Connecting Flights*, 158.

representation of a thing, which is closely associated to another by establishing relationships of contiguity between the two.[553] This responds to the theory of the 'digital double'. On the other hand, the metaphorical[554] can be traced in a representation that ordinarily designates one thing, but is used to designate another by establishing relationships of similarity between them, expressing the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar, through symbolism.[555] In this way, Lepage turns the actor/technology-medium/mediator into a luminous theatrical metaphor that expresses an 'ideological crisis'. The actor's energies reach an explicit narrative dimension through the aid of the technologically-enhanced factors/vectors, as a means of 'symbolising the emotion'. As a result, with the support of the post-human imagery for building his characters, the mix of acting and striking film images are turned into an emotionally charged theatrical metaphor of the human condition.[556] The effect is that his directing can help the audience to read this narration more effectively.

This directorial strategy is also concerned with the acting itself. Lepage, as Dundjerović points out, pulls together existing film material and uses this to build his

[553] For a fuller description see the work of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan on dreams and the unconscious. For example, in *The Andersen Project* (2005) there was a scene in which a high speed train rattling between Copenhagen and Cologne was accompanied by a loud techno-music score composed by Jean-Sebastien Côtè, which made a conceptual link with the physical and mentally stressful condition of the character.

[554] For example, in *Eonnagata* (2009) the double nature of the transvestite protagonist is represented apart from the woman (Sylvie Guillem) - man (Russell Maliphant) dichotomy, and with Michael Hulls's red and blue colour light framing symbolises the dynamic juxtaposition of warm and cold.

[555] 'Metonymy', Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, accessed October 20, 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/ EBchecked/ topic/378726/ metonymy>. 'Metaphor', Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, accessed October 20, 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/ 377872/metaphor>.

[556] For example in *Lipsynch* there was a scene in which the German neurologist Thomas removes a brain tumour from a singer. The image of the huge brain was projected on the screen accompanied by a monologue of a typical medical terminology about the power and the hypersensitivity, in terms of illness, of the human mind.

characters.[557] The possibilities offered by film projections reinforce the exposure of the inner-self of the play's characters. Dundjerović refers to this:

> They [the characters] are all engaged with the worlds that exist outside of social reality, where personal and collective mythologies and memories exist alongside fantasies, dreams and alternative existences, where past and present merge.[558]

The image of the character projected on the screen is perceived as more intimate than its live representation in the theatre and sustains a promise to the spectator of an exposure of the inner-self, the 'personal and collective mythologies, memories, fantasies, dreams and alternative existences', as Dundjerović states, of the characters. In this way, acting through the extensive use of the projector is perceived by the audience, as Leo Braudy has put it, 'less [as] an impersonation and more [as] a personation.'[559]

Lepage works on very personal topics to build his characters, which often involve the evocation of disturbed and alienated states of mind or the expression of ideas and relationships which are culturally bound. The expressive use of technology-based factors, therefore, seems to be the perfect medium to support the visual imagery related to these topics. As a result the screen image becomes more than decor for theatrical action. It becomes an integral part of the character's rationality and subjectivity,

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[557] Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *The Cinema of Robert Lepage. The Poetics of Memory* (London and New York: Wallflower Press, 2003), 103.
[558] Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, *The Cinema of Robert Lepage*, 144.
[559] Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 430.

advancing the plot and the character, adding to the messages and the meanings.[560] Lepage developed from a phase of acting (physical theatre) with puppets and objects[561] to developing an acting system amalgamated with media and technology, enhancing in this way the metaphor of an apparent dualism.

Consequently, the cyborg post-human imagery and this type of situational techno-acting are one of the main characteristics of the Lepagean model of totalising technology. In this he differs significantly from LeCompte in that his directing gives the impression that there is a synergy between technology and acting pointing to the emotion while in LeCompte that there is an anti-synergy and a focus on the intellect. Lepage uses technology to extend the performer's body to fully construct the character as an organic totality. He suggests in this way an aesthetisised *em-bodiment* of technology in his directing, while LeCompte proposes a *dis-embodiment* of technology. For Lepage, the convergence of human and technology for the construction of a post-human imagery develops an acting system harmonised with the technological apparatus building up on audience *synaesthesia*.

In conclusion, the three key characteristics discussed are the means by which we can recognise the nature of and the stages in development of Lepage's work and also the

[560] For example in *The Andersen Project* (2005) Lepage became part of the scenery by walking down the projected image of the Parisian Opera House's stairs, or by looking down the digitalised auditorium. The stage fright and the fear of public exposure that the Canadian songwriter, who is commissioned by the French Opera to write the libretto of a children's opera based on Andersen's fairytale of *The Dryad*, experiences is reflected on the distorted ideal beautification of the Opera's image, on the screen, which is overlaid with images of his libretto that he will never submit. This is another example of how technology's medialities produce dramatic effects.

[561] James Reynolds, 'Acting with puppets and objects. Representation and Perception in Robert Lapage's *The Far Side of the Moon*', *Performance Research* 12.4 (Dec. 2007): 132-142.

means by which we can identify his goal of totalising technology, a director's theatre and a distinct form of theatricality. The change that has taken place in Lepage himself thus relates to the alteration of his directorial vision since he is obliged to re-invent hereditary stage language, acting, dramaturgy, and design since it is the technology that now has the potential to create art and to become the prime source of theatricality. In his production *Lipsynch*, Lepage used technology in a way that highlighted the inextricable connection that he had made in his direction of totalising technology. Key elements, such as the enhanced role of multidisciplinary technology-based collaborators and designers to the level of co-creators, the use of the technical managers and technicians as performers, the cinematic techniques and technical finesse were all there, but so was the more sophisticated use of a cyborg post-human imagery, which enhanced the meaning of the play, and transformed the acting. Here, in this performance is the presentation of the last phase of the director's theatre trajectory from technical mediality, to multi-mediality and finally inter-mediality. The medialities of technology in his directing displayed in *Lipsynch,* provide evidence of his directorial development.

A CASE-STUDY: LIPSYNCH

Lepage with his group Ex Machina and in collaboration with the group Théâtre sans Frontiers presented *Lipsynch*, for the first time in Newcastle (Northern Stage) in February 2007[562] and in London (Barbican Theatre) in September 2008.[563] The

[562] I attended this version at Northern Stage in Newcastle, 2007. The performance had been announced to last for five hours, but by the time that I arrived there the stage manager announced that Lepage had decided to add one more hour, indicating in this way that the performance was continuously under

development of the performance lasted for two years, and the final production became an epic marathon that lasted for 9 hours.[564] *Lipsynch*, (Newcastle cycle 2007, London cycle 2008) written by Lepage and his company, was performed in four languages English, French, German, and Spanish consisting of nine interlocking stories with verbal communication and the exploration of voice, speech, language and identity as a main theme. Specifically, it presented the narratives related to the main theme with opera singing, aspects of brain-damage and aphasia, the degeneration of the body, mind, mental illness, hallucinations, neurosurgery, medicine, voice, bilingualism, socio-cultural identity, dubbing, media and memory using tapes, answerphones, and recordings.

The play begins when Austrian-Canadian opera singer Ada, herself an orphan refugee, adopts the baby of Lupe, a dead Nicaraguan prostitute. The boy, Jeremy grows up, rebels, becomes a heavy metal singer in London and then an international filmmaker in America. Jeremy depicts his family history in his first movie. Ada's German neurologist lover Thomas removes a brain tumour from a singer who ends up dubbing Jeremy's film into French. An exploration of the unknown world of voice-overs and sound effects leads into the stories of a BBC announcer, the story of the abused

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development. I have also filled in the questionnaire handed out by Lepage contributing in this way to the process as a active audience.

[563] See the Northern Stage (2007) and Barbican Theatre's (2008) programmes of *Lipsynch*. Ex Machina, Festival Trans Amériques (Montreal), Théâtre sans Frontières (Newcastle); *Lipsynch*. Dir. Robert Lepage. Northern Stage, Newcastle 19-14 February 2007 and Barbican Theatre, London, 7-14 September 2008. Programmes.

[564] For Lepage's open rehearsals process see Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović, 'Robert Lepage and Ex Machina: *Lipcynch* (2007), Performance Transformations and Cycles,' in Jen Harvie and Andy Lavender, eds., *Making Contemporary Theatre: International Rehearsal Processes* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 168-173.

Nicaraguan prostitute and the story of a sound engineer from the Canary Islands who organises the funeral for his dead comedian dad. The farcical story of Jackson, a dismally portrayed, divorcing, tango-dancing Scottish policeman and the devastating story of Michelle suffering from mental illness,[565] as well as the story of Mane, the singer, who has lost her memory through a brain tumour,[566] are some of the interwoven plots. The play finishes with a devastating final image of the now adult baby boy Jeremy cradling his child-woman mother Lupe, which recalls the classical Michelangelo's Pieta.

Here I will explain how the British critics attempted to overview this work. What is shared in these accounts is the idea of the directorial magical-genius touch. Michael Billington, writing in the Guardian, says: 'Yet I would be lying if I didn't admit the show has moments of pure Lepage magic' and that 'there is a strong element of elegiac romanticism behind Lepage's visual legerdemain'.[567] Charles Spencer talks about 'flights of imaginative genius' and he adds: 'As in all Lepage's best work, there is a constant sense of curiosity, generosity of spirit and theatrical daring, as the piece veers endearingly between soap opera, farcical comedy, high art, and the disconcerting quality of a vivid ... dream.'[568]

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[565] There is an excellent scene in a snowbound Montreal bookshop in which Lepage offers a dual perspective, first offering us an exterior vision of the shop's conversing figures, and then taking us inside to hear their actual words.

[566] In a scene she employs a deaf woman to lip-read what the father, who died when she was a child, is saying on certain silent home-made family films, but it's only when she uses her own voice, puts the words into the paternal mouth, that she magically summons his lost tones into the room.

[567] Michael Billington, 'Lipsynch,' *Guardian* (Sept. 9, 2008), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 28: 18 (Aug. 25 - Sept. 7, 2008): 995-996.

[568] Charles Spencer, 'Lipsynch,' *Daily Telegraph* (Sept. 9, 2008), reproduced in London Theatre Record, 28: 18 (Aug. 25 - Sept. 7, 2008): 996.

An excellent example of an intermixing of eye-catching transformation and rapid flowing continuity occurs in the first story of 'Ada'.[569] The play opens with the opera singer Ada (Rebecca Blankenship) on a Lufthansa flight from Frankfurt to Montreal during which a young Nicaraguan prostitute, named Lupe (Nuria Garcia) dies holding her crying baby boy. Ada, who discovers her, later adopts the orphaned baby. Through aural and visual coups (*coups-de-théâtre*) performed by the stage technicians on stage the scenery changes to a London Tube carriage. While the stage technicians are rotating the whole system of a trio wall structure on stage trucks, and with the help of the strobe lighting, we see the baby transformed into a child and then a teenager (Rick Miller) before our eyes 'in a typically wondrous Lepage transformation within a single scene' according to a reviewer (*coups-de-théâtre* practice).[570]

In the above scene, Lepage presents technicians-operators on stage as performers shattering the preconceptions of the traditional out-of-sight role of the technicians in the performance. The team of stagehands are employed to manipulate the material needed for each scene moving stage objects, dismantling and constructing the scenery, using the camera and the sound-lighting consoles. This takes place without interrupting the action of the play or intervening in the stage action by overemphasising the human-mechanic/technical dichotomy. Technicians, stage managers and stagehands rotate the versatile blocks of the set in front of the eyes of the spectators facilitating the idea of the

[569] There were also other examples of rapid metamorphosis such as that of the aeroplane into an apartment, and the kitchen into a recording studio.
[570] Ian Shuttleworth, 'Lipsynch,' *Financial Times* (Sept. 10, 2008), reproduced in London Theatre Record, 28: 18 (Aug. 25 - Sept. 7, 2008): 997.

nonstop metamorphoses of the setting and in this way stressing their role, presenting a creative dimension, creating and accomplishing a specific relationship with the performance's aesthetics in a completely natural-organic way for stage logic, communicating a metatheatrical reflection through the medialities of the tension between the technician-operator's presence and the actor's.

Additionally, the sound operators are visible on stage as a metaphorical extension of the performance's topic based on the exploration of 'voice, speech and language'.[571] Throughout the emphatic delivery or mediality of the sound production apparatus on stage (sound consoles, sound delivery systems and computers, microphones, sound technicians) which produces live the sound plot[572] designed by the sound designer Jean-Sébastien Côté, the director emphasises his unifying theme which is the human voice. His explorations of the body/voice and identity/meaning challenges the directorial norms because of the images and their referents of the technicians, the technological apparatus/equipment and its specific functionality (film dubbing, mediatisation through answering machines, speech neurosurgery) on stage. In this way Lepage's directing enhances the dramaturgy of the theme 'voice, speech and language' in the light of his concerns about how themes like these can be represented in the contemporary theatre through the increased use of the medialities of technology, and therefore 'the form became an incarnation of the play's themes'.

[571] See production's programmes. *Lipsynch*. Ex Machina, Festival Trans Amériques (Montreal), Théâtre sans Frontières (Newcastle). *Lipsynch*. Dir. Robert Lepage. Northern Stage, Newcastle 19-14 February 2007 and Barbican Theatre, London, 7-14 September 2008. Programmes.
[572] For the Sound Plot see Christine White, A. *Technical Theatre: A Practical Introduction* (London: Arnold, 2001), 105.

By presenting technicians-operators on stage as performers, Lepage not only facilitates the stage action, but also aestheticises the functionality of the technical apparatus, as well as the theatricality of the technical team, under Rutsky's perspective of technology as 'high techne'. By putting the role of the technicians and craftspeople at the centre of the stage action and by performing their actual role in front of the eyes of the audience without separating them from the performers, Lepage suggests an intellectual shifting paradigm of theatricality by creating a more theatrically conscious performance for the performers and the audience within the framework of a postmodernist performance, referring to the 'space of creativity itself' reflecting on Knowles's remarks. This directorial strategy gives rise to obvious questions about how it is possible for the director to produce a unity, through contrapuntal stage qualities like these, by mixing equally the organic, the mechanical and technical nature of the production with the aim of accomplishing the visible sense of homogeneity, or else a 'pseudo-organic totality' recalling Matthew Wilson Smith's definition.[573]

This emphatic mediality of the technology-based qualities of Lepage's directing in close interrelationship with the element of transformation and the complexity of interlocking stories that are presented on stage remediating cinematic rhythms are exemplary features of Lepage's narrative. Additionally the medialities of the technicians' presence on stage seem to shift his directorial model. This type of theatricality not only gives the impression of a contrapuntal unity, when the technicians'

[573] Matthew Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art: From Bayreuth to Cyberspace* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 3.

presence on stage becomes an organic part of the whole directorial work, but also stimulates the spectator's perception attesting on an 'elegiac romanticism' - according to Billington.[574] I argue that this impression is based significantly on this special relationship between directing and technology. The language of the theatre in Lepage expands since there is now the system of performance (scenography of the dramatic space) plus the system of technological production (technology-based agents) interwoven, creating a *coups-de-théâtre* practice. As a result Kershaw's critical assessment of different performance commons that manage to create homologies leading to a theatre ecology seems to be established in Lepage's paradigm.

The element of transformation, based on the multiple functionality of individual elements, and the rapid flowing (re)assembling of units of the setting has run throughout and played an important role in Lepage's directing. With the technicians-operators on stage as performers, scene changing takes place more rapidly, without jolts or interruptions, in a steady flowing motion, preserving the momentum and maintaining the energy. In the same way his directorial narrative obviously shifts by making the meaning more complicated. The metaphor of the tension between 'the human and the cosmic', expands 'space and personhood' melting into a 'series of theatrical transformations' as Lavender has stated. The shift in directing takes place when there is a trajectory from the mode of representation based on machinery kinetic design such as the use of the monolith to the notion of simulation such as the use of technicians-operators on stage for the re-constructing of the set in accordance with the play as

[574] Michael Billington, 'Lipsynch,' *Guardian* (Sept. 9, 2008), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 28: 18 (Aug. 25 - Sept. 7, 2008): 996.

themes in order to mediate the effects of transformation. Flow, interactivity and simultaneity, key features in Lepage's directing manage to 'convey the texture of modern experience' according to Lavender.

In *Lipsynch*, inter-mediality is presented in an intriguing way: a scene is set in a Soho jazz bar, which is constructed out of disjointed pieces of wood scattered on stage. When the image of the setting is projected on the back wall, the position of the camera is at the precise point where these disjoint pieces of wood seem to become solid tables, a chair and a piano. The actors move among them as if they are dealing with real jointed furniture and the perspective and spatiality of the stage are totally transformed. This scene borrows from computer science's code (interactivity, simultaneity, automatisation, simulation and hyper-linking with the non fixed flexible structures) where each object has a hyperlink which will restore it to a whole only when the cursor, the eye of the audience, passes over it. The viewers can create their own navigation through the links in Lepage's recognition of new cultural conditions and a new type of visual literacy.

However, the disjointed pieces of furniture scattered on stage find their real hypostases and functionality for the play only in simulation. The weird topology on stage becomes comprehensible only through the totalising topology on the screen. The screen exceeds the stage and shifts the ontology of the stage by permitting the audience to make associations not only with the artificiality of the stage, but also with the ephemeral. This presents the idea that the real world is not any more visible through the

stage, but rather actual and the reality for the spectator and the performer. Computer technologies create a virtual version of Shakespeare's quote 'all the world is a stage' pointing to a world stage that remediates/refashions the world of computers. Therefore, Lepage by simulating a digital topology and digital logic for the stage narration demonstrates how the inter-mediality of stage and screen can yield a deepened notion of the perceived spatiality of the stage. Specifically, in this scene, only through the camera, and therefore a technological device, is the audience able to perceive the totality of the stage action and only through the projection, and therefore another technological device, can it be fully conceived as space. Therefore, the shift in directing takes place by the trajectory from the modes of representation, such as the use of video projections as a background for adding to the scenery and completing the meaning, to the mode of simulation such as the dispersed stage scenery that completes its ontology on the screen.[575]

By 2007, Lepage had absorbed contemporary technology into his work in a highly original and provocative way and with each technological development he developed his creativity to harness it and obey its structures. The double logic of remediation, recalling Bolter and Grusin's term, seems to be activated since immediacy and hypermediacy are closely connected. The unified audio-visual performance space mediates immediacy to the audience, through the proliferation and multiplication of the media in play on stage and the hypertextual methods of their organisation. Multiplication of the media and hypertextual methods indicate an awareness of the

[575] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 336.

constructed nature of the performance space by the audience which offers a new sensorium based upon the notion of interaction and connectivity.[576] In this way Lepage's directing contributes to the notion that theatre offers a hypermedium paradigm. This brings to mind media's screen reflections as a poetic space in which according to Dixon and Smith 'separation and integration of time and space' coexist. [577]

The Lepagean mode of techno-acting is also found in *Lipsynch* where there is a scene of shocking beauty. Lupe, the young Nicaraguan sex-slave, narrates how, as a teenager, she had been abused. On one part of the stage we could see the performer Nuria Garcia wearing a white top covering her upper body, and delivering a poignant climatic monologue about the abuse she suffered. On the opposite part of the stage there is a male performer with a hood covering his head and his bare torso exposed. Other performers behind him were touching his torso violently, implying the act of using force to have sexual intercourse. The image of the active multiple hands that are violently touching the body are projected onto Garcia's white clothing in real time, representing Lupe's repetitively tortured reality, while Garcia is building her monologue to an almost feverish level. Here, Lepage used projected images on the actor's body and under the clear influence of the notion of inter-mediality imbued the monologue and the projection with a feeling of extravagant sentimentality.

[576] For immediacy and hypermediacy see Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 45.
[577] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 336.

Lepage's directing manipulates visual imagery through situational emotions. Situational emotions reproduce feelings of anger, sadness, or fear, especially when they reflect autobiographic memories, such as the childhood memories of a stage character. These situational emotions seem to be enhanced by the blend of acting with technological means such as the projected digital image on Garcia's body. Therefore, this blend of film-projection and theatre-climatic monologue demonstrates the evolution of an acting system within the context of a post-total theatre aesthetics, which is profoundly amalgamated with technology. The exposure of the technical artificiality of the stage all brilliantly juxtaposed with the acting not only confirms the McLuhan dictum in the formation of a powerful post-human imagery, but clearly extends it by demonstrating that the numerous possibilities of technology on stage can be conceived as 'extensions of the man'.[578] The combined force of the blend provides a moment of huge emotional and intellectual impact on the spectator. In this way Lepage demonstrates that the synergy between the two catalysts of film-projection and theatre-climatic monologue can elicit a hybrid emotional charge and contribute to an acting theory profoundly amalgamated with technology under the influence of the inter-mediality phase. This example of director's theatre displays a shift from relying on using the screen to construct an extension of the character and express directorial possibilities, to actually overlaying the technology on the actor's body to structure a stage narrative that adds to the plot, addresses the spectators' senses, and also communicates a pictorial meaning of the post-human discourse, and at the same time demonstrating the mechanics of the stage reshaping of the audience's reception by

[578] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man* (Corte Madera, CA: Gingko Press, 2003).

producing complex and contradictory dramatic effects. According to this, the tension between the machinery-technology and the actor communicates a metatheatrical reflection. 'Virtual bodily metamorphosis', reflecting on Dixon and Smith's terminology, embodies a consciousness.[579] The technology-based double juxtaposed on stage mediates the effects of dual reality. The actor's presence and the exposure of its technological artificiality lead to the amplification of the narrative. This dual reality is an inherently theatrical entity and, therefore, adds to the notion that theatre offers a hypermedium, reflecting on Chapple and Kattenbelt.

In the preceding case study I have demonstrated how Lepage used technology to create his totalising technology model as applied to the production of *Lypsynch* and how, in detail the various technological tools are integrated and for what purpose. I have suggested that a distinct type of directing develops, which not only evolves the stage language, through the crucial engagement of the director with the element of technology, but also reveals the development of Lepage's directorial role in his choices of multi-mediality and inter-mediality.

THEATRICALITY AND THE MEDIALITIES OF TOTALISING TECHNOLOGY IN LEPAGE'S DIRECTING

In Lepagean productions the stage is monopolised by technology, the lavish and spectacular stagecraft described by the critics as 'multi-media extravaganzas',

[579] Dixon and Smith, *Digital Performance*, 212.

'technically flabbergasting productions' and the uninterrupted succession of skilful, virtuoso stage stunts that defy gravity and logic, termed by the critics as a 'tour de force' mesmerising the audience.[580] Over the years Lepage has consistently employed total theatre techniques in order to construct spectacles with mesmerising intensity, productions which overwhelm the audience.[581] The directing model of totalising technology enables a stylised work that mediates a post-Wagnerian theatricality.

The Wagnerian notion of the total artwork, which was further expanded by subsequent generations of theatrical practitioners and theoreticians, such as Gordon-Craig, Appia, Artaud and, therefore, gradually shifted to the notion of 'total theatre'[582] proved to be an ideological predecessor of Lepage. Accordingly, Patrice Pavis terms this as:

> A production that endeavours to use all available artistic resourses to come up with a spectacle that appeals to all the senses, thereby creating the impression of totality and a wealth of meaning that overwhelms the audience.[583]

In the theatrical environment technical mediality is discernible by the characteristics of coherence, convergence and fluidity. Coherence, as Lepage is quoted earlier in this chapter as saying, is what is essential in the relationship between technology, stage action and a breakdown will be evidenced by poor receptions of the work. It is the

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[580] Alastair Macaulay, 'Elsinore,' *Financial Times* (Jan. 7, 1997), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 17: 1/2 (Jan. 1-28, 1997): 12.
[581] For example, he mixes live action on stage with different arts, such as motion pictures, photography and film; or different dramatic styles, such as farce, soap opera, realism, surrealism; or different dramatic genres, such as opera, puppet theatre (Bunraku), shadow-play, Noh drama.
[582] See Chapter One.
[583] Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre*, 405.

explicit demonstration and visual evidence of how the presence of technology makes the stage action happen that proves there is a clear and obvious link between the two.

Convergence is the interweaving of stage acting and technology or of different technological approaches into a visual and dramaturgical unity that extends the emotional reach of the play and the performances. Convergence is mediated by film equipment and techniques which contribute to the cinematic effects previously referred to and enhance the emotional engagement of the audience.

The characteristic of fluidity gives the impression that one scene 'melts into' another. For example, the dramatic effect of transformation, which is when one single idea-motif is used for a variety of dramatic purposes, such as the case of the multiple use of mobilised scenery that rapidly transforms the dramatic space, demonstrates the character of fluidity. Fluid or flowing transformation is mediated when striking stage images follow one another in a rapid succession and stage objects, scenery and images shift rapidly from one form to another. This is made possible by the multiple functionality of technological elements on stage, or the rapid, flowing (re)assembling of sets by technician-performers.

Lepage has managed to master this jumping-off point, the transitional point of the element of transformation facilitating the flowing and the continuous change of the stage action. An excellent example of this intermixing of dynamic overwhelming

transformation and rapid flowing changeability occurred in *Lipsynch*.[584] This continuous, flexible, re-shaping mobility on stage produces kinaesthetic effects that seem to support a theatricality of a post-Wagnerian theatre. In the model of totalising technology the element of transformation becomes exceedingly effective and indicative that there is an evolving autonomous agent present that interacts with the other elements of the production and significantly influences theatrical aesthetics.

Lepage uses the properties of the technological medium/mediator to tell his story.[585] Technology, as an instrument of his narration, mediates his imaginary personal worlds. As a result, those emotions find their fullest expression and creative behavioural manifestation via the manipulation of technological objects, tools, and media. This action of evoking emotions through the presence of technology and at the same time sustaining the spectator's interest in the live performance is fundamental to the notion of totalising technology. Lepage has stated explicitly:

> People sometimes say to me … 'Why do you make us voyeurs of these hard situations?' But that's what theater is there for. It's the ceremony of life and death and of love. People have started abandoning theater because it stopped giving them these sensations. … People go to theater not to feel good. … They go there to feel.[586]

[584] When for example the scenery was transformed from an aircraft cabin into a London Underground train.
[585] The specific technology/materiality of the technological object.
[586] Laura Winters, 'The world is his canvas, and his inspiration', *New York Times* (Dec. 1, 1996), accessed June 29, 2007. <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/01/theater/the-world-is-his-canvas-and-his-inspiration.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>.

Through the prism of the directing model of totalising technology, technology can be interpreted as shaping the spectator's emotions and thus be in the service of emotion. The relation between technology and the production of emotions becomes highly relevant, despite the fact that scholars and critics have struggled to defend live performance's unique ontology against technology's presence. In contrast, I suggest that there are moments that evoke compassionate emotions, and prove the authority of the technological means in sustaining the humanity of live performance. The examples I have selected show how a synergy of acting and technology has the power to engender emotions, to produce narrative and to shape a spectators' experience at the moment of their encounter with technologically-enhanced factors in the theatre.

Additionally, the medialities of technology in Lepage's model of totalising technology contribute in the concept of technology in motion where technology seems to provide flows of energy and rhythms giving the impression that has human qualities and causing sensational effects. For Lepage, technologically-generated patterns or rhythmic visual scores appear to be central to the interaction that occurs between the stage and the audience. When this strategy is used, the production becomes a mesmeric experience for the audience, enjoyable and absorbing as they are drawn imperceptibly into an ever more intimate involvement with the performance in accordance with the principles of total theatre. The viewer is excited by the manipulation of mechanical and digital equipment. Lepage explains this effect:

> The spectator's pleasure really takes wing when the staging itself, rather than, solely, the show's over-familiar content, becomes available for enjoyment. This is part of the novelty, the excitement that we seek.[587]

In this way his directing harmoniously channels the energies of theatrical and technological potential for a dramatic presentation.

Lepage has directed by presenting the synergy between performance and technology, in accordance with the rules and principles of total theatre. Today, he uses extensively a range of different technological tools that draw on new technologies in order to produce original creative content across convergent, old, new and emerging, multiple media platforms. These ideas reflect Wilson Smith's aspect of 'exposing and celebrating' the 'outward signs of mechanical production'[588] on which the performance relies and manifests a historical trajectory from the notion of mediality to multi-mediality and inter-mediality and thus the theatricality of a postmodern total theatre. For Lepage, totalising technology is still evolving and thus his own role must evolve with it.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has investigated the role of technology in the developmental identity of the theatre director Robert Lepage. I have demonstrated how Lepage's technological methodology, gave rise to a particular model of directing, that of totalising technology, and how this particular stage language developed as technology itself became more

[587] Andy Lavender, *Hamlet in Pieces*, 147.
[588] Matthew Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art: From Bayreuth to Cyberspace* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 3.

sophisticated and Lepage became more daring. After a brief introduction to Lepage's history, ideology and aesthetics, I examined his earlier production of *Elsinore* (1996), which prepared the ground for a shift in his directing. Then I identified the three basic characteristics of totalising technology. These could be seen through an evolution of the role of the technology-based collaborators, who are not only visible on stage, but also formulate an organic part of the stage action and production's aesthetics as performers; through an evolution which took place as a result of the application of film techniques/form and techniques of computer science; and finally through an evolution of an acting system profoundly amalgamated with technology. The above have become the established trademark of Lepage's evolving directing.

Next, I turned to my case study, the performance *Lipsynch* (2007, 2008), and focused on specific scenes that illustrated the three key theoretical points as well as defining the medialities of the model of totalising technology by linking his directorial trajectory with the production of a specific theatricality which has been interwoven with the discourse on a post-Wagnerian aesthetic of total theatre. Following a historical trajectory from the notion of mediality to multi-mediality and inter-mediality I presented how Lepage's role as a director has been developed.

The most obvious findings to emerge are that technology in his directing system generates overwhelming emotions and sensory experience giving the impression of a world constantly in motion only just on the edge of coherence. In his direction, technology becomes humanised and humans become entwined with machines. To have

reached the mastery of this effect, Lepage had to go through a series of changes in his own directorial development and long periods of experimentation. These findings justify my hypothesis that the Lepagean model of directing not only provides conceptual information about directing models with technology, but also an illustration of the power of technical mediality in creative endeavour. Therefore, it is important to note that Lepage chooses his technological objects, tools, media and arranges them in the theatrical space in light of what he thinks will be the most revealing and expressive emotions on stage, and the way the audience is most likely to emotionally respond to them. As a result, throughout his career, his directorial process has turned towards creating an aesthetic experience: the technological generation of emotions on stage as well as an iconography of technology in motion.

Another notable theatrical effect of totalising technology in Lepage's directing is to create theatrical poetry, a technology which is experienced and perceived by the spectator as being enriched by poetic elements such as 'the poetic power of the imagination'.[589] The dramatic effect produced by this, the consequences this poetic charge has on the theatrical performance, is that the spectator makes an association between the presence of technology and its medial role in the expression of aesthetical values, such as the poetic qualities of imaginative directing. As the critic Ian Johns has put it, it 'draws on the poetic power of the imagination'.[590] I contend that these characteristics of totalising technology expand the notion of poetic theatre, which

[589] This expression has been taken from the critic Ian Johns. Ian Johns, 'The Far Side of the Moon', *The Times* (October 18, 2003), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 23: 21 (8 - 21 Oct, 2003): 1407.
[590] Ian Johns, 'The Far Side of the Moon', *The Times* (October 18, 2003), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 23: 21 (8 - 21 Oct, 2003): 1407.

according to Patrice Pavis in his lucid and comprehensive explanation of the theatre term, 'is not whether a poem is being performed', but 'whether the text performed is highly poetic' and 'what consequences this poetic charge has on the theatrical performance'.[591]

It is also important to understand how musicality is treated within the model of totalising technology and how it is used in the theatrical sense. On one hand, there is coherent harmonious communication between the stage and the audience. On the other hand, a coordinated harmonious relationship between the element of technology and all the other media, bodies and objects. Using a musical metaphor, the theatre director Meyerhold has stated that 'a musically organized performance is not a performance in which one makes music or sings constantly from off stage, but a performance with a precise rhythmic score, a performance in which time is strictly ordered'.[592] In an analogy to this, using totalising technology produces patterns or rhythmic visual scores derived from the technological medium/mediator in which time is strictly ordered in the fluidity that I have previously analysed.

The values advocated by Lepage's directing are, in fact, common to most directors: clarity, precision, coherence and comprehensiveness of the action on stage, but in the case of Lepage these are enforced and dominated by technological means. As a result, his directing seeks through technology to sustain the control, flexibility, energy, precision, and rhythm of the performance. This means that directors, such as Lepage,

[591] Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre*, 275.
[592] Ibid, 226.

automatically and naturally do what normally works on stage, not only with acting and creative design, but also with the synergy of technology. The notion of totalising technology as a theoretical concept behind Lepage's directing model is actually what works on stage in order to make the audience respond emotionally. This provides new opportunities for the expansion of his directorial expression, limited only by technological development, and his ability to develop his own directorial role.

CHAPTER FOUR: KATIE MITCHELL AND TECHNOLOGICAL HYBRIDISATION

This chapter investigates the role of technology in the development of the theatre director Katie Mitchell. It contains a critical evaluation of how Mitchell's directorial style has been influenced by her use of technology and how she demonstrates a model of directing which I term technological hybridisation. Her development is compared and contrasted to that of LeCompte and Lepage in the previous chapters to find common traits and examine why she embarked on her own idiosynchratic style. Like LeCompte and Lepage in the previous chapters, Mitchell is reliant on technical medialities and these have created new forms of stage language for her. This chapter looks closely at Mitchell's practice since 2006 to identify changes in her directorial style brought about by her involvement with technology.

In this chapter, I will introduce Mitchell's history, ideology and aesthetics, referring to her production, *The Oresteia* (1999) that prepared the ground for a radical change in her directing. I will identify three basic characteristics of technological hybridisation in a directing model which I have identified in Mitchell's work. Following this, I will present my case study, which is a close reading of the performance *Attempts on her Life* (2007), to illustrate my central points and discuss her directorial trajectory in terms of her use of mediality, multi-mediality and inter-mediality. Finally, I will investigate her theatricality which is dominated by the discourse on the aesthetics of the Stanislavskian system. My arguments and discussions of Mitchell's work are also

supported by my attendance at rehearsals of Mitchell's *The Waves* (2008)[593] at the National Theatre and *After Dido* (2009)[594] at the Young Vic. I also studied the production books of her work from the National Theatre archives and I witnessed Mitchell's complicated work in live performances. Spesificaly, I attended the rehearsals of the Waves at the National Theatre (London) from 18th to 20th of August 2008, and the rehearsals of the After Dido at Young Vic (London) from 7th to 14th of April 2009. The viewing strategy also involved the use of audio-visual material of Mitchell's past productions.

BACKGROUND, IDEOLOGY, AESTHETICS

It is important to historicise and contextualise Mitchell's practice in order to identify continuities in her directing and to argue about a significant change in her directorial role which appears in her recent technology-based productions. Specifically, I will examine elements such as her engagement with Russian realism, and how she expressed this, her preoccupation with detail, the economy of her actors' expression and precision, as well as her use of space in collaboration with the scenographer Vicki Mortimer. I will examine those past productions which prepared the ground for *The Waves* era, which is the first indication of a shift in her directorial identity based

[593] Royal National Theatre. *Waves. A Record of the Multimedia Work and Devised by Katie Mitchell and the Company from the Text of Virginia Woolf's Novel 'The Waves'*. London: Oberon Books, 2008. Programme.
[594] English National Opera and The Young Vic. *After Dido*. Based on Henry Purcell's opera Dido and Aeneas. Dir. Katie Mitchell. The Young Vic, London, 15- 25 April, 2009. Programme.

significantly on the agent of technology. In this way I can argue that Mitchell has achieved a very distinct directing style or director's theatre, which is still evolving.

The young Mitchell started her apprenticeship as an assistant director for the theatre company Plaines Plough and at the Royal Shakespeare Company, in 1987. Later, she assisted directors such as Di Trevis, Adrian Noble, Ron Daniels, Cecily Berry and Deborah Warner.[595] The success of the productions at the RSC, began her attraction to a repertoire based on the classics.[596] Mitchell says about this:

> I like big ideas like life, death, family and politics. The more all-encompassing a play seems, the more it excites me.[597]

Her professional career as a director started in 1990. Her company, Classics on a Shoestring, aimed to produce historically faithful productions with the minimum of stage effects. Her company also became known for staging classics in tiny venues such as the Gate and the Old Red Lion theatres.[598] She was periodically employed by the Royal Shakespeare Company, Royal Court, Donmar Warehouse, Young Vic, Welsh National Opera and during the 1990s she presented her first work at the Royal National Theatre when Richard Eyre was artistic director. Over the years, she became one of the

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[595] Maria Shevtsova, 'On Directing: A conversation with Katie Mitchell' *New Theatre Quarterly*, 22.1 (2006): 4. Maria Shevtsova and Christopher Innes, *Directors directing: Conversations on Theatre* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 177-205.

[596] Moreover, the choice of the name of her company 'Classics on a Shoestring' confirmed this artistic tendency.

[597] Fox, Chloe, 'The entertainer: Chloe Fox meets theatre director Katie Mitchell,' *Vogue* (UK edition), Feb. 21, 2005.

[598] Classics on a Shoestring theatre company produced plays such as the anonymous *Arden of Faversham* (1990), *Vassa Zheleznova* by Gorky (1990), *Women of Troy* by Euripides (1991) and *A Woman Killed with Kindness* by Heywood (1992).

National's permanent collaborators and today she is an associate director. Her thematic quest has remained consistent and includes a classic repertoire such as Greek drama (Aeschylus, Euripides), classic works from the early phases of the modern repertoire (Chekhov, Gorky, Ibsen, Strindberg, Toller), later modern classics (Lorca, Genet, Beckett, Pinter), with examples of contemporary theatre (Crimp). Through classical revivals Mitchell has managed to establish herself as a leading female figure in the British theatre of the 1990s. Theatre critic Michael Billington comments that Mitchell is 'one of the best directors in Britain.'[599]

Mitchell's National Theatre period is divided into two phases: the phase before Nicolas Hytner, and the period from 2003 under Hytner's artistic direction. These phases are characterised by contrasting approaches in her directorial style. It is broadly known that Hytner, the artistic director of the National Theatre, had continually invited Mitchell to direct in one of the greatest European theatre institutions, a clear indication that he favoured a particular cultural policy regarding the repertory and the programme of the National Theatre: radical and controversial theatre practices. Mitchell, as a standard bearer of experimentation, functioned as Hytner's statement-of-intent for a pioneering and modern identity for an established institution, a traditional audience and the huge funding that an institution such as the National Theatre attracts. The National Theatre supported Mitchell's attempt to do something different and rebellious in an environment where this was so difficult.

[599] Michael Billington, 'Easter', *Guardian* (Jan. 29, 1995), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 15: 1/2 (Jan. 1-28, 1995): 69.

The National Theatre's patron audience, mostly white, middle-aged, and middle-class, were confronted with an ambitious, experimental, digital performance style of theatre-making. The critical outcome was divided. Half of the critics were upset and the other half thrilled. But without doubt Mitchell made an impact on both admirers and opponents.[600] Within the supportive environment of the National Theatre Mitchell presented three of her technology-based productions *The Waves* (2006, 2008) *Attempts on her Life* (2007), *... some trace of her* (2008), and *After Dido* (2009) at the Young Vic, commissioned by the Royal Opera (UK). There were remarkable consistencies in form and style which I will analyse in this chapter.

There was a strong historical-ideological context in her directing. Russian realism had attracted Mitchell from her early days in theatre. This was because she saw in its illusion and identification, in the 'reality effect' as it has been termed by Patrice Pavis, a theatrical device both reflective and supportive.[601] Mitchell's admiration for

[600] See the reviews: Kate Bassett, *Independent on Sunday* (March 18, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27: 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 311; Michael Billington, *The Guardian* (Mar. 15, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 309; Georgina Brown, *Mail on Sunday* (March 18, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 311-312; Nicholas De Jongh, *Evening Standard* (March 15, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27: 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 309; Simon Edge, *Daily Express* (March 16, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 311; Jane Edwardes, *Time Out London* (March 21, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 312; Lloyd Evans, *Spectator* (March 23, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 312; Sarah Hemming, *Financial Times* (March 16, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 310; Alice Jones, *Independent* (March 15, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 309; Patrick Marmion, *What's On in London* (March 22, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 312; John Nathan, *Jewish Chronicle* (March 23, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 312; Benedict Nightingale, *The Times* (March 16, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 310; Mark Shenton, *Sunday Express* (March 18, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 311; Maxie Szalwinska, *Metro London* (March 16, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27: 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 310; Tim Walker, *Sunday Telegraph* (March 25, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 312.

[601] Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre*, 304.

Stanislavsky and his system was deeply held and her recent book on the 'director's craft' suggests a continuing close allegiance to this system.[602] Realism was a late nineteenth century movement which aimed to rid the theatre of histrionics in acting and the too-evident artifice of well-made plays and to focus on a more natural-seeming acting style and well-structured plays which reflected situations in real life.[603]

But what were the most significant of Mitchell's attitudes in her directorial work that preceded her directorial shift modified by the technology-based elements? Clearly, she was particularly attracted by Russian realism based on Chekhov's plays. From her first attempts at directing Mitchell sought to provide a model of historical recreation echoing the theatrical aesthetics of Russian realism. This was achieved through close to the bone replication of period details, costumes, settings, and the economy of an actor's expression and precision, characteristics which nourished a consistent and accurate directorial style. At first these characteristics became Mitchell's directorial trademark and those which came to the attention of audiences and critics: a tightly crafted, realistic emphatic direction, devoted to historical recreation. For example, there was her scrupulous attention to detail concerning acting, design, via Vicky Mortimer's atmospheric, bleakly spacious settings and low technology in sound and lighting effects. The constant tick of clocks, the noise of winter rain and the use of lamplights or candles

[602] Katie Mitchell, *The Director's Craft: A Handbook for the Theatre* (New York: Routledge, 2008).
[603] For 'realism' see Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art: Naturalism, Impressionism, the Film Age*, Vol. 4, trans. Arnold Hauser and Stanley Godman (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 68.

revealed Mitchell's type of illusionistic directing.[604] Mitchell's directing fastidiously continued to underline a detailed realism, something which would remain her constant directorial signature for many years.

Another constant thread in her directing was her careful and detailed work with the actors, and the canonical practice of the illusionistic performance mode. Mitchell is considered primarily an 'actor's director'. 'Actor's director' means that directing is focused on acting methods, such as the Stanislavsky system, or versions of it, such as Michael Chekhov's acting techniques or Lee Strasberg's method.[605] Mitchell, as Shevtsova stated, was deeply influenced by the work of directors such as Tadeusz Kantor, Lev Dodin, Anatoly Vasilyev, Eimuntas Nekrošius and Wlodzimierz Staniewski whose work through blending elements of the Grotowskian tradition, the 'essential state of being' of the performer modulated by ritualistic rhythm indicates the need for a naturalistic truthfulness of the experience of situations on stage.[606] Mitchell herself has stated that:

> These are extraordinary practitioners, all of whom, I discovered, practice a different version of Stanislavsky. Since then I have tried to understand, practically, how to make that type of theatre.[607]

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[604] For example the lighting designers David Ludlam, Mark Anger and Tina MacHugh have lit Mitchell's performances in a way that they have created realistic atmosphere. One can discern a development of this type of lighting aesthetics in Werner's cinematography in Mitchell's latest performances.
[605] The theatrical language has several code words which are tailored by the professionals, by insiders or members of a group, who have a deep knowledge of group's inner workings.
[606] For a further description of the Grotowskian method tradition see James Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta, *Jerzy Grotowski* (London: Routledge, 2007), 80-81.
[607] Maria Shevtsova, 'On Directing: A conversation with Katie Mitchell' *New Theatre Quarterly*, 22.1 (2006): 9.

As a result, she has shown a constant dedication to meticulously investigating the characters of the play through the expression of their emotions. Inspired by Stanislavsky and his method she translated her understanding of the text into specific tasks for the actors to execute. She explains:

> I have found his [Stanislavsky's] later works on physical actions of more use in my own work than his earlier work on emotional memory.[608]

The Stanislavsky 'method of physical actions' can be summarised as a rehearsal process according to which emotions arose inevitably from an actor's actions, rather than the actors trying to evoke emotions consciously through 'emotional memory'. Mitchell also used physical actions as a means of communicating the emotions of the characters. She also enhanced the verbal and physical relationship between the character-performers in order to deal with precise circumstances by using behaviours from real-life situations. Therefore, her early productions were characterised by psychological realism and were very different from the experimental visions of later times. In Mitchell's paradigm the contrast between her former style of directing towards a more experimental technology-based work, which she has produced recently, is evident of a shift in directorial practice. However, I argue that the technique of close to real-life behaviourism as a directorial strategy is one that she has loyally followed and was a prototype for developing her later multimedia work.

[608] Mitchell, *The Director's Craft*, 227.

Mitchell's directorial principles involved meticulous research and the painstaking process of delving into the atmosphere of the play. For example, her company went on field trips to the Ukraine for the study of *The Dybbuk* (1992)[609] and travelled to Nottingham to experience the cultural elements necessary for the production of the *Machine Wreckers* (1995).[610] Mitchell says of this practice:

> I go on a journey with each text I work on. … I try to get as close to the text as I can from as many different angles as possible.[611]

Another element of Mitchell's directing that has remained constant over the years is the production of an authentically grimy, dark atmosphere. The critic Charles Spenser has said that Mitchell is 'the princess of darkness in British theatre', whose 'true vocation is casting dreadful spells of gloom and doom.'[612] Her trademark illusionistic performance mode has presented a specific character: a merciless, killjoy spirit, chilly atmosphere, emanate feelings of depression and a gloomy atmosphere. In productions such as *Ghosts* (1994) by Ibsen[613] and in *Easter* (1995) by Strindberg,[614] for example, Mitchell fastidiously exuded this sense of depression. By focusing on details, such as the offstage sound of the rain, which dribbled with irritating monotony or the recreation

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[609] A 1914 expressionistic drama by S. Ansky. S. Ansky (1863- 1920) was a Russian Jewish writer and folklorist. 'S. Ansky,' *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed July 16, 2012. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/26836/S-Ansky>.

[610] Play by Toller. Ernst Toller (1893-1939). Dramatist, poet, and political activist in Germany in the 1920s. His Expressionist plays embodied his spirit of social protest. 'Ernst Toller,' *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed July 16, 2012. <http://www.britannica.com/ EBchecked/topic/598659/Ernst-Toller>.

[611] Gabriella Giannachi and Mary Luckburst, eds., *On Directing: Interviews with Directors* (London: Faber and Faber, 1999), 96.

[612] Charles Spenser, 'Nightsongs,' *Daily Telegraph* (Feb. 28, 2002), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 22: 5 (Feb. 26 – Mar. 11, 2002): 262.

[613] *Ghosts*, a drama in three acts by Henrik Ibsen, published in 1881.

[614] A 1901 symbolic religious drama by Swedish playwright August Strindberg.

of the light of the Scandinavian climate; her directing contributed to the eloquence of a chilly claustrophobia, something which helped the audience to understand the psychological pressures on the characters.[615] This emphasis on moments in nature through the use of low technology, as documented above, associated with thorough research of the place and time of the action, were particularly resonant of Stanislavsky's ideas on how nature affects the behaviour of characters in a play. Mitchell has successfully applied this chilly, gloomy, claustrophobic mode of representation in several pieces which depended on diverse dramatic genres, such as Greek tragedy (Aeschylus, Euripides) or surrealism (Beckett, Genet, Pinter).

The creation of these atmospheres is heavily dependent on the support of her collaborator and set designer Vicky Mortimer. Mortimer, has been a regular member of Mitchell's creative team for over 15 years, and has specialised in the visual exploration of this type of chilly atmosphere. Mortimer's atmospheric designs of cold, spacious settings, which provide little comfort or shelter to the drama's personae, have lent support to Mitchell's vision for many years now and were important in the adaptation of the productions into black-box studio theatres such as the Pit (Barbican) or Cottesloe (National Theatre). The chiaroscuro, low-lit, naturalistic designs of Mortimer, create intimacy in tiny theatres like these, and illustrate an insidious, claustrophobic, suffocating world. Both Mitchell and Mortimer, in a successful director-designer

[615] 'Vicki Mortimer [set design] and Tina MacHugh [lighting design] have clearly researched and understood the relation in Ibsen between climate and character reproducing perfectly the sleeting rain, the lemony dusk, the fierce morning sun that are part of the play as visual and emotional texture.' Michael Billington, 'Ghosts', *Guardian* (Apr. 8, 1994), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 14: 7 (Mar. 26 - Apr. 8, 1994): 398.

interaction, have given a characteristic visual identity to the productions through the aesthetics of photographic naturalism. Characteristically, in her interviews Mitchell has frequently commented that she no longer really knows if it is she herself or Mortimer who is actually directing.[616] Consequently in Mitchell's productions, the constant elements of scrupulously detailed research work with the actors, and Mortimer's austere designs are a dominant aesthetic element that operates effectively within Mitchell's directing rationale, especially in her latest technology-based productions.

In the late 1990s, Mitchell revealed a new directorial intention which was to be fully developed in the future: the association of classical plays with contemporary political events. For example, with *The Mysteries* (1997),[617] a six-hour production based on the medieval Mystery plays, suits, guns, sounds of helicopters, massive graves, images of creation projected onto white sheets draped over God's belly she mediated a cynical up-to-date interpretation with explicitly social and political dimensions such as the Bosnian war.[618] However, this modernist approach, based on a stylisation ideologically constructed and inspired by social-political events, did not shake her

[616] Katie Mitchell interviewed by Genista Macintosh, National Theatre's Archive (Royal National Theatre, London, Jan. 3, 1994).
[617] Written by Edward Kemp and Katie Mitchell. Staged in two parts *The Creation* and *The Pas*sion for the Royal Shakespeare Company, at the Other Place, April 1997 and revised into one play *The Mysteries* for the Barbican, at Pit, January 1998. 'Edward Kemp's *The Mysteries*,' Edward Kemp web site, accessed July 16, 2012. <http://www.edwardkemp.co.uk/page10.htm>.
[618] The Bosnian War or the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995). It was an ethnically rooted war in the former republic of Yugoslavia, with a multiethnic population (Bosnians, Serbs, and Croats). *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed July 12, 2012. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1365562/Bosnian-conflict>.

consistent emphasis on acutely realistic acting as an aesthetic strategy towards a more non-illusionistic mode of directing.[619]

More recently, Mitchell's directing has included an amalgamation of naturalistic, symbolic and surrealistic elements indicating a development in her directing. This practice created an odd atmosphere that can be termed as 'hysterical realism'. The emphasis was still on hyper-realistic details in order to create the illusion of a reality which, however, included interventions of evasive scenes where the actors performed repetitive actions that create a state of hysteria, expanding in this way Stanislavsky's notion on 'physical action'. For example, in the *Iphigenia at Aulis* (2004) and *Women of Troy* (2008) by Euripides, the chorus, with a trance-like, slow-motion, Pina Bausch-influenced dance, weaved across the stage like inflexible wooden dolls, and underlined the psychological need of the female chorus to break out of emotional and mental pressures in a melancholic echo of their former happiness which was lost forever. With this type of intervention the style of the production was obviously not consistent and, therefore, could not be fully described as realistic. The effect of the multi-dimensional visual identity of Mitchell's directing was caused by a willingness to mix diverse styles: some of them producing the atmosphere of fantasy and others of reality. This development suggests Mitchell's need to investigate new forms and styles of directing, underlining her need to set up a new kind of relationship between the genre of illusionistic theatre and contemporary theatre audiences. In this way, Mitchell began to purposefully move away from pure, dolorous realism and to exploit techniques with the

[619] For more on Mitchell's directing of *The Mysteries* see Katie Normington, 'Little Acts of Faith: Katie Mitchell's the Mysteries', *New Theatre Quarterly* 14.2 (1998): 102-107.

unquestionable intention of bringing the illusionistic effect to another level, under the cultural logic of postmodernism. This intention has evolved into a directorial style explicitly based on technology as I will demonstrate in this chapter.

PERFORMANCE THAT PREPARED THE GROUND FOR THE TURNING POINT

So far I have focused on how Mitchell developed a director's theatre via her attention to acting methods, ideology and aesthetics. This has historised and contextualised Mitchell's practice in order to identify continuities in her directing. I have particularly examined her growing attention to detail, the use of a spacious flexible space and her interest in the creation of a precision and economy of expression in acting. The trajectory of Mitchell's work from Russian realism and hysterical realism and her turn towards a postmodern digital aesthetics helps to identify the devices/strategies which constituted a change in her role as a director. Now, I will attempt to demonstrate how a further change in her directorial role occurred through an apparent turn in technological facts and properties and how these elements pushed her towards the development of a director's theatre in a contemporary theatrical environment. In this section of the chapter, I will examine the use of multimedia technology in the play *The Oresteia* (1999). This will help me to identify some of the continuities in her directing and the turning points in the course of the development of her role as a director.

The Oresteia (1999) was a production of Aeschylus's classic trilogy which lasted seven hours and was spread over two evenings in the Cottesloe auditorium of the National Theatre in London.[620] In this production, Mitchell relied on the elements that she had followed loyally and which had been the focus of her career, elements such as the long duration (over six hours), modern costume for classic theatre (1950s modern-dress), intense, collective acting style, with an emphasis on hyper-realistic details and a distorted reality leading to hysterical realism (through movement), up-to-date political references, for example, the production was informed by the current events in Kosovo[621] and Northern Ireland[622] and live folk music, since Eastern European folk music was played by a violinist and accordionist. These had all been part of her directorial signature and were clearly manifested in this production. Additionally, the familiar grim irony and the merciless, dark, pessimistic atmosphere, mediated by Mortimer's set design, gave an overall sense of the continuity of Mitchell's directorial principles. However, in this performance Mitchell's directing shifted through the use of the medialities of technology.

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[620] Royal National Theatre. *Oresteia: The Home Guard* (Part I) and *The Daughters of Darkness* (Part II). By Aeschylus in a new version by Ted Hughes. Dir. Katie Mitchell. Royal National Theatre, Cottesloe, London, 24 September 1999 - 1 April 2000. Programme.

[621] Kosovo conflict (1998–99). Ethnic Albanians opposed ethnic Serbs and the government of Yugoslavia (the rump of the former federal state, comprising the republics of Serbia and Montenegro) in Kosovo. *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed July 12, 2012. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1380469/Kosovo-conflict>.

[622] Good Friday Agreement, also called Belfast Agreement or the Agreement. Accord reached on April 10, 1998, and ratified in both Ireland and Northern Ireland by popular vote on May 22, 1998, that called for devolved system of government in Northern Ireland. 'Good Friday Agreement.' *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed July 12, 2012. <http://www.britannica.com/ EBchecked/topic/59208/Good-Friday-Agreement>.

Mitchell used Ted Hughes's translation of *The Oresteia*, which was adapted for the stage in two parts entitled *The Home Guard* and *The Daughters of Darkness*.[623] The famous Aeschylean trilogy, which includes three plays *Agamemnon*, *The Choëphoroe* (*The Libation Bearers*), and *The Eumenides*, is a trilogy with which the poet won first prize in 458 B.C. in Athens. It recounts the history of the House of Atreus and begins with King Agamemnon returning home triumphant from the Trojan War and his murder together with Cassandra by his wife Clytemnestra. Then there is Clytemnestra's murder together with her lover Aegisthus, who took the throne, by her son Orestes with the help of his sister Electra. Finally, there is the torture of Orestes by the Furies for killing his mother, the trial of Orestes on the Hill of Ares in Athens, a prosecution led by the Furies and the defence by Apollo. This is followed by Athena's casting of the deciding vote and the end the cycle of revenge by the transformation of the Furies into Eumenides. Since Aeschylus's time, the trilogy has been one of the most famous Greek dramas with a long theatrical tradition. It is no surprise then a director like Mitchell presented an interest in staging *The Oresteia* since it raises significant issues related to classics, war and family, themes which have always been Mitchell's interests in the theatre. Additionally, Mitchell enriched the text with the voice of English poet Ted Hughes himself reading T.S. Eliot,[624] William Blake[625] and Thomas Paine's[626] texts in an

[623] Aeschylus, *The Oresteia: A New Translation by Ted Hughes*, translated by Ted Hughes (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000).
[624] T.S. Eliot, (1888- 1965). American-English poet, playwright, literary critic, and editor, a leader of the modernist movement in poetry in such works as The Waste Land (1922) and Four Quartets (1943). 'T.S. Eliot,' *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed July 12, 2012. <http:// www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/184705/TS-Eliot>.
[625] William Blake (1757-1827). English engraver, artist, poet, and visionary. 'William Blake,' *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed July 12, 2012. <http:// www.britannica.com/ EBchecked/topic/68793/William-Blake>.

attempt to perform intertextuality and to establish a postmodern polysemic production style. The aural presence of the contemporary poet-translator mediated a meta-theatrical effect as a mark of self-referentiality.

Acting was based on a naturalistic delivery of meaning, with strong performances by Lilo Baur (Cassandra/Electra) and Anastasia Hill (Clytemnestra).[627] However, spectacular pictorial marks were added that are normally bound in more symbolic-surrealistic-hyperrealistic theatrical clichés. For example, in *Agamemnon* Mitchell tackled the problem of the chorus by making it a group of red-bereted wheelchair-bound war veterans with nurses in attendance and made the Furies faceless suited state torturers with briefcases of grisly implements. The red carpet which Clytemnestra rolled out for Agamemnon was a patchwork of hundreds of Iphigenia's little dresses dyed in blood. Apollo was in a doctor's white coat and carried a Red Cross case and the ghost of the family's victim, the little girl Iphigenia, was hanging around the action in her nightwear throughout the whole performance creating an eerie atmosphere. The action took place in a minimalist set with black walls and many props, the familiar style of the set designer Vicki Mortimer. This atmospheric, bleakly spacious setting enhanced the grim and merciless atmosphere. The costumes evoked the late 1940s or early 50s soon after the war. Mitchell was following a directorial path based on blending realism with symbolic-surrealistic-hyperrealistic elements and by presenting in this way a multi-

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[626] Thomas Paine (1737-1809). English-American writer and political pamphleteer whose writings were important influences on the American Revolution (18th century). 'Thomas Paine,' *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed July 12, 2012. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/438489/Thomas-Paine>.

[627] Charles Spencer, 'The Oresteia', *Daily Telegraph* (Dec. 3, 1999), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 19: 24 (Nov. 19- Dec. 2, 1999): 1594.

dimensional visual-conceptual identity of the performance within a postmodern framework and thus her directing underwent significant changes.

On stage, she created a metaphorical landscape of the political, social and visual mapping of the new millennium. Peter Storhard accurately observed that this was 'a genuine millennial Oresteia'.[628] She achieved this through a postmodern pictorialism, a hybrid form of blended styles with an inclination to the distance, coolness and irony of the stage images. She also raised the issue of how classical works could be interpreted on a postmodern stage, since in this performance she had included multimedia technologies such as hand-held video cameras used for close-ups on the actors' faces. Mitchell's *Oresteia* certainly aimed to pack a contemporary 'political punch', as Oliver Jones stated, with a production 'for the millennium'.[629]

In this play, for the first time, Mitchell presented the basic characteristics of a technological directing model. She demonstrated that she was looking for further directorial elements which would somehow contribute to the play's meaning. As a result, she followed a new directorial path by incorporating the medialities of multimedia technologies. This would challenge the conservative notion that Greek tragedy is limited to the text-centric elements and demonstrated that thematic and narrative issues of the Greek tragedy, such as an anti-war dialectic, can be represented through the use of film-documentary techniques. It also provided a type of cultural

[628] Peter Storhard, 'This is a genuine millennial Oresteia', *The Times* (Dec. 2, 1999), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 19: 24 (Nov. 19- Dec. 2, 1999): 1593.
[629] Oliver Jones, 'The Oresteia', *What's On in London* (Dec. 8, 1999), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 19: 24 (Nov. 19- Dec.2, 1999): 1592.

criticism related to the major issue of how Greek tragedy can be represented nowadays with contemporary political references, and to what extent staging has developed 'in the age of digital reproduction' reflecting on Douglas.[630]

Mitchell's approach to acting had been heavily influenced by the emphasis on the actors themselves but her sustained interest in realism changed as she worked with live actors and their mediatisation on a screen. The close-ups of the actors freeze-framed their anguished expressions providing an effect like a still photograph. One of the strongest moments, for example, was when Clytemnestra's (Anastasia Hille) unsynchronised face on the screen turned into a monstrous howl as she summoned the Furies to avenge her murder on stage. As a result, the narrative of stage acting and the psychological development of the character as a directing method shifted to a narrative of the screen (through mediatisation) and a symbolic-hyperrealistic development of the character (through a psycho-dynamic image) based on an alternative/unconventional sensory experience-affectivity (sense of sight and sound) of space-time and the subjectivity of the character. Through the medialities of the camera-screen Mitchell mediated the effects of an abstract formalism (towards a non-representation). Additionally, the new stage narration gave the impression that Mitchell was showing the tragic story of the House of Atreus from a partial point of view. For example, in the scene where Electra is straddled above her father's grave, a video camera looks up Electra's skirts and projects the image on to a screen giving the impression that we witness the scene through the dead king's view from within the grave itself providing a

[630] Davis, Douglas. 'The Work of Art in the Age of Digital Reproduction.' *Leonardo* 28.5 (1995): 381-6.

different interpretation that the ghost of the dead king or his rotten corpse equally experience the decay of the world of the living. In this way Mitchell multiplied the points of focus under the logic of postmodernism.

Black arrows flew over Clytemnestra's map of the Balkans as if it were a NATO general's briefing chart and a description of the hydrogen bomb and the dictionary entry defining the word 'justice' were both shown on the screen as Mitchell created an intertextual performance via the use of multimedia with a clear didactic intention much as Piscator had used the documentaries' projections for political reasons in the past. In this strategy Mitchell drew attention to the ethical-moral parameters raised by Greek tragedy as a contemporary-political reference and perhaps gave the impression that she was patronizing her audience with a didactic mode which diminished a timeless tragedy into a morality play. Specifically, the critic Charles Spencer said: 'The busy Miss Mitchell is constantly at our shoulder, telling us how to react, how to think.' [631] These visuals produced a tone of grim irony mediating the cynicism of the contemporary politics.

In this section, I have demonstrated how Mitchell in her paradigmatic directing of the play *The Oresteia* used multimedia technologies so that the break with her directorial continuity can be seen and the introduction of technological media is clearly identified both in form and intention. Mitchell's directorial principles in *The Oresteia* had been: acting based on physiological realism, association of the classic text with

[631] Charles Spencer, 'The Oresteia,' *Daily Telegraph* (Dec. 3, 1999), reproduced in *London Theatre Record*, 19: 24 (Nov. 19- Dec. 2, 1999): 1594.

contemporary political events, a gloomy atmosphere, a chilly spacious setting and an amalgamation of realistic and hyper-realistic details. But in this production Mitchell's directing was unequivocally dependent on a set of multi-medial technological properties. From this moment Mitchell began to forge a directorial identity which deviated from her previous tendencies. The conceptions of cinematic theatricality, multimedia representation and the aesthetic value of the screen on stage had gradually started to fuse in Mitchell's directorial trends. As a result, a significant change in her directorial style started to occur with the insertion, admission and intersection of multi-medial performance practices. In the following section I will examine how this became intrinsic to the development of a director's theatre.

Following *The Oresteia* Mitchell's presented *The Waves* (2006, 2008) *Attempts on her Life* (2007), *...some trace of her* (2008), and *After Dido* (2009). These were outstanding accomplishments of exceptional technological practices and therefore can be identified as the turning points of Mitchell's directorial role. For the first time, she used screens, video projections and live computerised manipulations of sound and image in an attempt to recreate a cinematic and televisual effect in the theatre. Mitchell took these to extremes as she built a directorial structure through a complex system of referentiality and meaning and, shifted her style into a new direction. I will focus specifically on the performance of *Attempts on her Life* (2007) in more detail to give a comprehensive illumination of the above and to examine the operations of the technology, the manifestations of inter-mediality and the implications of these in her directing.

REHEARSALS

The following comments are based on my own observations when attending Mitchell's rehearsals. Observation of rehearsals as a research method in theatre and performance is about the action of being there for several days and participating in the rehearsal activities as an active observer. In this way the production team and the actors seem to interact not only with each other but also with the researcher. I attempted to see the communication of ideas in the rehearsals for the research purposes as a unity of the director's practices. The textualisation of the rehearsal process might be problematic for someone who had not had experience as an assistant director or director himself and was not trained in decoding the live observation data into a report, something that the assistant directors normally do. But for me this was not the case. Of course there were times where this active participation of the researcher through observation seems to be biased. However, the analysis of the observational data for this thesis has been made as objective as possible. This is a fundamental shift in my methodology and impacts on the other strategies discussed in the earlier chapters by way of being stronger and inviting engagement through a multiple-layer perspective.

One of her main tasks as a director during rehearsals is to answer the question: what do the people in the play do? To answer this, she identifies the units of action which are based on the fictional scenes (fabula) of the play. Then a second question appears: what do the actors on the stage do? What is recounted and from which

perspective? These units of action are those which construct the clarifying frameworks and fortify the concentrated action on the stage of Mitchell's *mise en scène*. Thus, Mitchell realises a specific physical form of the work on stage. Characters motivate the moves, which help to tell the story and involve us in the fabula. However, at the same time, the actors cause actions which help to tell the story of a controversial subject: the story of theatre-making and TV, film, and radio. This second-layer story alienates or estranges us from the fictional story through explicit use of the theatre, film, TV or radio medium-apparatus as a metaphor.

Moves, positioning and blocking guide the audience to look at what matters, and so enable them to see everything that needs to be seen.[632] And what matters here is the process: the basic way in which the theatrical, cinematic and televisual medium functions. As a result, central to Mitchell's work is the 'process-processing' which, paraphrasing Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, 'is the thing.'[633] So there is a multi-layered approach to the design and interpretation of *what matters* in her production: is it the novel or play? Is it its representation by the film? Or is it the process of the representation itself? Wisely, in her interviews Mitchell does not attempt to give a direct answer. In this way, the director roots the production in its time developing the character of a postmodern *mise en scène*.

[632] The word 'cover' and 'covering' appears in production notes more than 80 times. In the director's notes we do not have the common use of the 'blocking notion' but the 'cover' notion. Each actor mainly covers a specific actor part from the moments he/she is performing or there is a need for extra hand-help. *Attempts on her Life*. Dir. Katie Mitchell (2008). Royal National Theatre Archive. Production notes.
[633] William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet*, Prince of Denmark, Act II, scene 2, lines 603–605.

While this is taking place, Mitchell is gathering the tools required to move rehearsals onto a more creative phase. Leo Warner, the director of photography and video designer, states:

> Throughout all of this, Katie's role is keeping a sharp lookout for the overall 'composite picture' of the performance, which is a combination of both the physical action on stage, and the output which the audience sees on screen. Because we are working in a live theatre environment, it is this often intangible tension between stage and screen which requires the most detailed attention, and only the director has the overview necessary to make the final call.[634]

During rehearsals the actors are introduced to the video, sound and lighting equipment, and are shown how to operate it correctly, since they need to take on the role of lighting and camera operator in the show as well as their character-personae an interesting contrast to Lepage where technicians become actors in his productions. The director of photography, Leo Warner discusses basic technical knowledge and the grammar of film composition with them. The purpose of this is to help the actors understand the complex language of film sequences and the traditional cinematic conventions such as shot composition, multi-point lighting, camera movement, dramatic action and editing techniques. In this way, traditional cinematic conventions are used methodologically, in an organised system, by Mitchell when she directs. However, there are moments in the production when she chooses deliberately to challenge these standard practices, for example, when she uses multiple actors to make up the movement of a single character. During rehearsals the team also examines the possible visual references from film and

[634] Royal National Theatre. *...some trace of her*. Inspired by 'The Idiot' by Fyodor Dostoevsky. Dir: Katie Mitchell. Cottesloe, London. 30 July – 21 October 2008. Programme.

photographic sources, in order to understand the principles of the film composition and make visual the ideas of the play, in accordance with Mitchell's scrupulous research. They choose to study photographers and film-makers whose visual responsiveness and affinities are close to the 'tone and timbre' of the story and the characters. For example, photographic references include Lady Clementina Hawarden (portrait photographer, 19th century),[635] Edvard Munch (Norwegian expressionist painter),[636] Francesca Woodman (American photographer of the 1970s)[637] and the film works of Andrei Tarkovsky.[638] Mitchell's ideological position on production modes and theatre-making can also be clearly identified in her use of the medialities of technology and particularly in her meticulous study of the composition of the film image.

The rehearsal space is filled with strong lights (this is the lighting that resembles daylight and the brightness of full sun and the space is completely lit exhibiting a strong or bright flood of light), cameras, several microphones, video projectors and cabling. After the text has been analysed and the fundamentals of the character's human psychology have been established, the text is re-imagined as a series of film shots and sound effects that are completely separate and unconnected with the very nature of the theatrical event itself, much like the design of a film story-board, a narrative work based on a set of sketches arranged in sequence, ready to be filmed. For every dramatic

[635] For the photographer Clementina, Lady Hawarden see Dodier, *Virginia. Clementina, Lady Hawarden: Studies from Life, 1857 - 1864*. London: V&A Publications, 1999. See also 'Lady Clementina Hawarden biography,' Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed June 21, 2010. <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/l/lady-clementina-hawarden/>.
[636] Ulrich Bischoff, *Edvard Munch: 1863-1944* (Cologne: Taschen, 2000).
[637] Chris Townsend, and George Woodman, *Francesca Woodman* (London: Phaidon, 2006).
[638] Mark Le Fanu, *The Cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky*, (BFI Publishers, London, 1987).

moment on stage a film-shot and soundscape are set up. The company stages a scene, chooses camera positions and choreographs the movement and the positioning of the lighting. Finally props and sceneographic elements are added by the designer, Vicki Mortimer. However, in the case study of the performance *After Dido* a reverse action takes place. Vicki Mortimer first designed the space/setting and then the actors-singers started to improvise their movements in it.[639]

The physical movement of both performers and cameras is devised and tested. Sound effects are generated live by the performers using the 'foley' technique. Dialogue and voice-over commentary are added in. Concealed or out-of-shot microphones are used for the dialogues, monologues and narration. Gareth Fry, the sound designer, ensures the optimal microphone performance by placing the microphones in relation to the sound source, the actor, and using the boom suspends the microphone above and slightly ahead of the actor. The lighting by Paul Constable, involves film lighting units and theatrical lanterns which are combined in a particularly complex and skilful way following regular or repetitive arrangements in the space. Single lighting units with scrims (called 'arri') are small lights that are rarely used on stage and balance the absorbing light of the screen providing a wonderfully clever lighting, soft and almost dream-like. Recorded and live music by Paul Clark is performed by musicians who are concealed under the stage or by the actors themselves. Gareth Fry shapes the final aural

[639] Vicky Mortimer provided this information to me during my attendance of the rehearsals of *After Dido*.

picture, blending live music with pre-recorded tonal and musical elements. By the end of this process the company has meticulously set-up the individual action shots.[640]

The space-time-action continuum developed by Mitchell must be seen in the context of the entire production. The 'trinomial nexus of space-time-action' constitutes one body by drawing the rest of the performance to it, 'like a magnet'.[641] Mitchell painstakingly sets up the individual shots of action. The action is entirely played out on screens above the stage. Actors' units of stage action are always seen on the screen. However, whenever they are outside the visible action of the screen they continue the stage action as sound or camera- people but always remain visible to us. The 'gestural space' created by the positions and the movements of the performers in the stage space reproducing sounds or images with the handheld camera provide a kinaesthetic experience-affectivity for both the actors and the audience. As a result there is a shift in Mitchell's directing from the sensory affectivity of sight and sound through the use of multimedia technology (in *The Oresteia*) to the kinaesthetic affectivity of the multimedia technology. As in a Bauhaus performance, camera and cables are attached to the performer's body and are extensions of his or her very presence on stage.

The group approach materialises in the form of a high-speed rendition of the text, accompanied by frantic on-stage activity, such as video blow-ups of the onstage actors, which distract from what is said and done at the fictional level. With great haste and

[640] They physically mark cameras, microphone settings and lighting positions.
[641] Patrice Pavis, *Analyzing Performance: Theater, Dance and Film*, trans. David Williams (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), 148.

excitement the actors locate cameras and tripods in the space. All the trucked elements move around at speed throughout every change in the show and roll over cables. The performers double as scene-setters, musicians and foley artists and work the key props: the video cameras. Mitchell's concept transfers the TV-film studio-workshop practice to a stage-studio set in order to demystify the 'behind the scenes' activity. It is a flamboyant, elaborate and highly audacious creative process which stretches the parameters of theatre's relationship with technology. It is a kind of anti-theatre in keeping with the experimental neo-avant-garde movement.

Mitchell creates a theatrical work through audio-visual elements. The essence of her directing lies in the ability of the actors to recreate a series of complex set-ups at speed and live on stage, in front of our eyes. As a result, there is no 'can' (canned is when the technological effectiveness provided is not pre-recorded or prepared in advance). Therefore, the director explores all the issues raised through the real-time process of creating. Every image Mitchell produces has a dual reality: its constructive reality on the screen, and its deconstructive reality on stage. Every moment on stage has a second, simultaneous life on screen, a dual reality which further weakens the 'truth'. Consequently, we can see precisely and in real-time how this dual reality is being produced and are exhilarated by this challenging and effortlessly entertaining techno-exploration. Mitchell explores the ways in which media and technology are integrated into the materials of the live performance and there is a practical integration of aesthetic concepts from different media into a new context. According to Pavis, by seeing this kind of work 'being created before your very eyes' the audience can experience 'a

revelatory theatrical moment'.[642] With staggering precision Mitchell succeeds in her attempt to make us appreciate the material of the performance for as long as possible. We perceive and comprehend the performance's particular material elements, forms and signifiers and we have a tendency to remain on the side of the signifier allowing ourselves to be impressed and utterly convinced by the theatrical and cinematic signifiers. A material-based segmentation seems to correspond to the dynamic of Mitchell's performance creating something that contains revelation on an aesthetic level.

How the theory of technological hybridisation is evident in Mitchell's model of directing with technology: Three key characteristics

In this section I will identify the major characteristics of the model of directing with technology, which permits a reading of Mitchell's directorial work, namely technological hybridisation, supporting my argument that a change occurs in the role of the director through the medialities of technology. The first is the shift of the role of the performer to a cameraman, secondly, the camera itself mediates the resistance of presence and combines with screen images to create coherent visual sequences that convey atmosphere and aesthetics and, thirdly, techno-acting that it is an evolution of Stanislavsky's acting system. All these will be identified in the structure of Mitchell's recent practice. Next, I will refer to the implications of technology on Mitchell's directing in a detailed assessment of her theatricality in her direction of *Attempts on her*

[642] Ibid, 49.

Life (2007). I will identify the technical medialities and technical hybridisation that produce dramatic effects and confirm that a development of the role of the director occurs through the constant applications of technology on stage.

THE ACTOR AS CAMERAMAN AND FOLEY ARTIST

In her acting system, Mitchell's actors must be trained as cameramen and simultaneously train their voice, inflection, posture, and body language for the camera. They have to learn to operate the lighting, sound, and laptop desks during the performance; and they must learn to use cans beltpacked with attached comms telephones and handsets to communicate with technical operators placed in the auditorium. They have to learn to produce live sound-effects using foley techniques in order to produce live sound-effects; they have to meticulously study the physiognomy of the face, their own face as well as of their fellow actors, for camerawork, and amplify their spontaneous reactions under circumstances similar to live TV shows. Finally, they have to learn the other actors' lines and cues in order to perform accurately in timing.

Mitchell's company was advised by Jack Stew, the professional foley artist who visited them during rehearsals.[643] Foley artists are specialists who traditionally record the sound effects for a film, in a sound studio, after a production has been edited.[644]

[643] Foley Artist Jack Stew, who won a Golden Reel Award by the Motion Picture Sound Editors for his work on *Slumdog Millionaire* (dir. Danny Boyle, 2008) has worked on films like *Twelve Monkeys* (1995), *Full Monty* (1997), *Sexy Beast* (2000), *An Education* (2009), *The Damned United* (2009),etcetera 'Jack Stew.' British Film Institute, accessed July 10, 2012. <http://explore.bfi.org.uk/4ce2bb3e90e17>.

[644] 'An expedient way of generating mundane effects is the 'foley' technique, which involves matching sound effects to picture. For footsteps, a foley artist chooses or creates an appropriate surface in a studio and records the sound of someone moving in place on it in time to the projected image. Foleying is the

They are renowned for using a variety of obscure objects to create the noises of everyday events (high-heeled shoes walking on a damp pavement, the sound of rain on the street, the clatter of passing carriages, bird song, flies buzzing) and also more abstract occurrences: the sound of flying, the sound of the sea, or the recalling of a long-forgotten conversation. The objects used to make a sound effect often bear little resemblance to the reality of the sound being created - sandpaper is used for wind in the leaves, and dog chews to create the sound of a thousand fairies.

Mitchell's directing gives the impression that everyone on stage is very clear, accurate and determined about the manipulation of the technological material, in the same way as she did with her acting system based on the principles of the economy of expression, the focus is details and precision. However, actors are kept relentlessly busy and simultaneously play not only the role of the character, but also the role of the cameraman-foley artist and technician-operator that assists in the making of the performance adding in this way an extra layer of stage narrative. As a result, the actors' presence on stage is shifted towards a new aesthetic, with hybrid identity, which significantly affects the spectator's perception of their function and aestheticism on stage (technical qualities are mediated to the actors, a type of theatrical remediation). Therefore, the idea of turning the actors into technicians, operators, cameramen and foley artists on stage contributes significantly to the overall theatrical experience of Mitchell's model of directing. Both the audience and the actor fully acknowledge not only the contribution of the technical apparatus during the whole performance, but also

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equivalent effect of looping dialogue.' 'Foley technique,' *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed July 16, 2012. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/ topic/212025/foley-technique>.

the creation of unusual dramatic effects.[645] By any evaluation this suggests a director who has become significantly dependent on the medialities of technology.

In comparison to LeCompte and Lepage, Mitchell presents the performers doubling the role of the technicians, performing as lighting, camera operators and foley artists, instead of presenting technicians as actors as do LeCompte (in the auditorium) and Lepage (on stage) in their recent performances. However, for Mitchell, actors still play a major part in production, hold a major authority and are essential to her expression. She emphasises their importance by transferring to them the content of the role of the technician and technical operator rather than transferring their role to technician as in the models of the other two directors. Both LeCompte and Lepage seem far more playful with their interactions of the technicians on stage and far more egalitarian in their creative endeavour.

However, there is a further development in the role of Mitchell's collaborators who become co-creators in opposition to the conformist historicity of their conventional role. Mitchell addresses the plethora of stage directions, based on descriptive narration, directly to her designers in order that they can deliver the 'atmosphere'. For example, during the rehearsals that I have observed, Gareth Fry, the sound designer, and Leo Warner, the director of video's photography, had at their disposal clear directions for interpreting the scenes straight from the text or music itself. In this way Mitchell turns an extensive descriptive narration (or music when she directs opera) to her advantage by

[645] I will refer comparatively to this phenomenon in relation to LeCompte and Mitchell's practice in the conclusion.

letting her designers feel free to play with their interpretations of the atmosphere of the text-music. During rehearsals of the performance *After Dido*, I observed how Mitchell was listening very carefully to Warner's proposals for the tones of colours and the layer masks of the video image in order that she could deliver more precisely the atmosphere of a past happiness, especially in the scene where Helena Lymbery lies in green grass on a summer afternoon with Dominic Rowan stroking her hair mediating the impression of a lost happiness of the former lovers. These ideas, profoundly related to technical aspects, were developed straight from the music itself enhancing and expanding the interaction between the technology-based collaborators and the staging of the play itself attesting in this way to a shift of creative roles. This distinct type of engagement between the activities of the technical managers and the actors' performance is an indication of the function of the directing model of technological hybridisation and points to a distinct shift in Mitchell's appreciation and use of the medialities of technology on stage in her directorial development.

THE CAMERA AS MEDIATOR IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE STAGE ACTION

In Mitchell's recent work, film cameras are used on and off stage generating images projected in real time against live performance, rather than simply using prefixed film and in this way the camera belongs to the 'character' shifting the traditional notion of the 'actor' as the only corporeal object of interest on stage. This is of decisive importance in understanding Mitchell's performance, as well as her development of her role as a director. The overwhelmingly detailed, and beautiful choreography of the actor with the camera has aesthetic implications for directing.

Additionally, an undoubtedly important factor in the *mise en scène* is Mitchell's method of adapting the scene of the play (for example in the use of texts by Woolf, Crimp, or Dostoyevsky) and applying them to the positions and the role of the cameras, to give the impression that they were operating in a distinctly critical relationship with the text on stage, pointing in this way to a significant development.

Mitchell employs video in her productions with the intention of evoking a poetic realism in contrast to the deconstruction of the stage action. This poetic naturalism requires that she effectively incorporates clips generated by the on stage action which contain visual details of faces/objects and ask the audience to contemplate and reflect upon the emotions and intensity of a particularly view of reality. However, the intensity of this practice is so strong that it reaches the meditative, poetic qualities of total theatre. And here is the meeting point with Lepage's practice: while Mitchell concurs with LeCompte's practice of 'fragmentary' and 'deconstruction' of the stage action at the same time she coincides with the intention of Lepage's practice therefore totalising it in relation to the film action. The film shots are so beautifully composed that they provide a highly emotional experience by virtue of their technical aspects. The effect of this dramatic representation is dependent on the fact that at any given moment the spectator can choose whether to look at the deconstructive live action, or the artificial, beautifully finished shot and to derive meaning by seeing both in juxtaposition.

Well-judged editing techniques shown on the screen in real time include some of the most important conventions for conveying meaning through the camera: for

example the use of jump cuts,[646] cross fades, direct address, 360 degree panning trucking, zooming (smash zoom), head room, and composition by the rule of thirds, as a process related to the aesthetics of the screen image.[647] The inclusion of TV practices and clichés borrowed from TV shows and processes complicates the visual experimentation on stage. The contemporary spectator, who broadly acknowledges the rules of this cinematic TV language, since they have been familiar with them since as of a very young age, instantly apprehends the message which the screen image conveys.

The transitions of the images bring to mind the 'finger-clicking' theatre exercise where the actor clicks her/his fingers when there is a new beat in the language while they are reading the text. This exercise helps to achieve clarity and precision and gives the acting a decisive energy as a result of the rhythm. From my observation of the rehearsals, I suggest that in Mitchell's work the transitions, changes and editing of the images on the screen support the text and allow the same precision in content as the typical 'finger-clicking' exercise. Her choice has added a crucial energy/liveliness on stage and the creation of a rhythm. The rhythmic tempo now draws greater attention.

By and large, the idea of developing an 'ear' for the cadences in the language and the flow of the prose are required in any *mise en scène*. The 'rhythmic structure' or 'tempo' of the performance, according to Pavis, relates directly to the *mise en scène* as a category.[648] However, in Mitchell's work, the idea of developing an 'eye' for the

[646] Cuts in the middle of a trucking shot.
[647] Shot composition, multi-point lighting, camera movement, dramatic action and editing technique.
[648] Patrice Pavis, *Analyzing Performance*, 156.

image's potential, reflecting on Eisenstein's 'camera eye' theory, as an equivalent to the 'ear', in order to establish the beat and rhythmic flow of the text in visual terms has taken her *mise en scène* a step further and developed her directorial model. This 'rhythmic structure' or 'tempo' is the result of the 'trajectories' of all the different rhythms, the total number of points carefully designed by Mitchell within a system of visual signs mediated by technology. New types of 'chronotopes' are produced by the stage actions. For example, a new performance space-time is created by the movement of the actor-camera formulating a type of hybrid corporeality and a Mitchellian directing model of technological hybridisation.

Additionally, the creation of a coherent sequence of edits or cuts for the video on the screen is related to the acting. Mitchell uses the strategy of multiple actors on stage to represent a single character by a duplicated movement in two shots. One actor plays the face, another performs the hands in a close-up, and another lends the voice. As a result, an indisputable dramatic effect is created by the 'deconstruction of presence' on stage, and the 'reconstruction of presence' on screen. This is Mitchell's main directorial mechanism-logic that mediates a dualism. By rapidly entering a different shot of a different actor for the same movement she deliberately draws attention to a 'punctum' which creates a specific 'studium' in turn, according to Roland Barthes's terms.[649] The 'studium' relates to the deconstruction of the actor's presence and the reconstruction of the same presence on the screen. The manipulation of the iconography has a

[649] 'Studium' in Barthes is related to the social-political context of a photograph while 'punctum' to the detail/partial object. For these terms see Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (London: Vintage, 1993), 42-43.

deconstructive character because it reasserts the workings of different media means at the same time. The fact that the apparatus itself, for example the presence of the camera on stage, makes this experience significant and leads to a sense of the power of the technological materialism to produce dramatic effects in theatre productions, affects the spectator (effectiveness of technology's medialities) at the actual moment of the performance.

As is evident from rehearsals, the contribution of the video designer Leo Warner is extremely important, since Mitchell relies exclusively on him to 'grade' the shots. All the grading effects are made with the use of a media server, which receives live inputs from the cameras, grades them and then outputs them to the multiple projectors, which deliver the image to the screen or multiple screens on stage.[650] The processing is done in real-time during the performance, providing a different experience of interactivity, something which is also a significant shift in the way the video is used. Leo Warner in the programme of *...some trace of her* says:

> As well as keeping a critical eye on the quality of the shots being produced and delivered, I am also concentrating on the successful integration of the projected image with the overall design. Where there is a single consistent screen size and position this is relatively easy, but we often experiment with a dynamically changing screen shape, and sometimes with the use of multiple simultaneous images. It is also during this phase that any pre-recorded material that has been

[650] Colour manipulation, the addition of texture and depth-of-field effects, and the treatment of the image create more 'filmic' aesthetics. The final image might be colour-graded and textured to look like an 1880s album end print photograph, but on stage we see the same scene in full colour, with no special effects and no mediating filters.

> shot outside of the rehearsal process will be incorporated. In these collaborations, pre-shot footage is rarely used.[651]

By 'grading' the shots I suggest that Mitchell achieves the 'poetic language' of the image which derives from the poetic language of the play. She produces an aura through certain cinematic aspects of the visual order such as the colour or the lighting that influences the whole production. Technological aspects have a primary role in the creation of her directorial quality and present certain qualities that have already been identified in the work of Lepage.

In addition, Mitchell's embrace of technology and her close bonds with a number of key performers and collaborators, who are willing to experiment with the technological means on stage, is one of the main characteristics of the directing model of technological hybridisation.[652] Her directorial composition gives an impression that is powerfully vitalised by postmodern aesthetics and driven by intertextuality. This occurs when Mitchell repeats stories/themes which she hears or sees in the visual arts, performance, film, television, or mediatised culture and incorporates the ideas of others into her own art mixing them up in her own style. In this way she manages to build on an association of complex ideas charged with emotional momentum. She challenges theatrical convention not only by showing the theatrical, cinematic or televisual event itself but also by making allusions to it.

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[651] See Royal National Theatre. ... *some trace of her*. Inspired by the Idiot by Fyodor Dostoevsky. Dir. Katie Mitchell. Royal National Theatre. Royal National Theatre, Cottesloe, London. 30 July - 21 October 2008. Programme.

[652] In the same way that LeCompte with the Wooster Group and Lepage with Ex Machina have permanent collaborators (Jim Clayburgh, Carl Fillion) for more than two decades.

I argue that this mode of presentation can also be traced in others as in the work of Elizabeth LeCompte with the Wooster Group and Robert Lepage with Ex Machina. All, however, seem to meet ideologically in a sense that all the elements are there to problematise the relationship between theatrical live performance and technologies to produce new theatrical forms and dramatic effects. This trademark *mise en scène* has developed from a shift in the use of naturalistic details. Several shots are built to service a single scene, and are positioned around the performance area in such a way that they can run simultaneously, and therefore be cut between seamlessly. The image on the screen tricks the eye into seeing continuity where there is none, the film's 'true lies' and produces dual realities and meanings. In this film there is on one hand a distant image that represents the fantasized and dreamlike perspective of the subjectivity, while on the other there is a near immediate action that represents the real. The first, the mediatised performance, mediates a willfully artificial polished image of reality with extreme power and beauty, while the second, the live, represents the close, painful, shocking reality. This synthesis mediates a schizophrenic rupture of the subjectivity. However the one can not exist without the other. The lie, an artificiality (the superimposition of the mediatised image), is also a truth (an illusion), and feels more real that the real. With these key directing moments Mitchell exploits the idea of continuity between shots and set-ups making the most of the potential of film and technological medialities on stage.

But what are the differences in the way Mitchell uses technology to remediate and the way that LeCompte and Lepage work? LeCompte seems to prefer the aesthetics of

soap operas and reality television, while Lepage prefers symbolic-poetic dream landscapes. Mitchell, as I have observed in all her rehearsals, interrogates the TV studio and media's achievements to divide, multiply, but also compose a homogenous artificial narration - a totality that deceives the eye and the mind. She conveys the impression that 'all the world is a stage', or even better, that all the world is media and all the stage a TV studio (postmodernist reflections of meta-communication). Even though all three directors aim to produce a combination of text-centred and stage-centred elements towards a materialistic-oriented vision of the *mise en scène*, Mitchell's directing model seems to be more advanced in that it makes the most of the achievements of the other two models that make playful use of technology. She is also distinctive in that she has developed a process of directorial construction by her hybridisation of the other models and she can work with increased efficiency as a result.

TECHNO-ACTING THROUGH REALISTIC MIMETIC MEDIALITIES

Mitchell's performance strategies are significantly based on LeCompte's notion of resistance or 'the deconstruction of presence'.[653] The resistance of presence is manifested by the actors either reading from the text, while simultaneously acting for the camera or establishing a presentation of the subject alternating between emotionally engaged acting and alienated report-like storytelling. The influence of Stanislavsky referred to earlier, served as a launch for this work. The actors play out their emotions through gesture, facial expression, and vocal intonation according to the established naturalistic mimetic mode *only* when they act in front of the camera and, therefore,

[653] The concept of 'presence' is the main structure of 'authority' in performance. The term is analysed in Philip Auslander, *Presence and Resistance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 30.

create illusory psychologically-based externalisations. However, this practice gives the impression that whatever they perform is artificial and causes mistrust and suspicion. Consequently, the text is distorted and not totally internalised by acting. As a result, the audience's relationship to the production is disrupted and the production conforms to the Brechtian notion of alienation. Mitchell's directing is characterised by the application of Brecht's alienation effect and critical distancing and her directorial strategies can be clearly deciphered.

In the rehearsals of *After Dido* the deconstruction of the stage action gave the impression that the director did not support the intentions of the opera-play. Mitchell's major concern was not to stage the opera itself but to give the audience an acknowledgement of the power of music over people's lives and here she applied her hybrid techniques for the first time to the operatic genre. Her intention was clearly declared with the use of the word 'after' in the title. Consequently, it is important to note her relationship with the texts-libretto as a director, not only to identify the stylistic deconstructive elements, such as for example the extensive use of cameras on stage, as an element that does not concern the context, but also to discern the influence of the notion of a post-commentary directorial style. She has adopted this approach with a variety of artistic genres, novels, theatre, plays and opera as an aesthetic strategy.

The strategy requires that the actors play themselves, for example when they are dressed up on stage, when they are covering others with a camera, producing a series of set-ups reading from the text or recreating a behaviour as if they were performing in a

film-TV studio. These moments of the 'the resistance of presence' in Mitchell are quite overpowering. Naturalistic mimetic representation is realised and represented through the mediatised self (mediated presence through mediatisation) on the screen. Mitchell suggests a process of construction (in rehearsals), deconstruction (on stage), reconstruction (on screen) of the subject of the actor him/herself under the means of mediatisation (a technique of representation through a technological transmission device) reflecting her own different reading of LeCompte's practice. In almost a narcissistic manner, the actor perceives him/herself acting through the mediality of the monitors and, at the same time, is being perceived by the audience and the other co-actors as s/he is acting through the mediality of the stage. Mitchell places the actors in a performative context that problematises the issue of the performer's authority through the notion of mediatisation. She encourages interpretations of psychoanalytic context reinforcing a Stanislavskian subjectivity-identity. In this way Mitchell re-constructs the lost 'aura' echoing Benjamin's famous term through the cinematic medium in a dialogue with Lepage's practice.

Mitchell constructs four-dimensional actors for example, by using an actor narrating on the microphone or the use of foley techniques to accompany the action, presenting some body parts that belong to different actors on the screen, or objects such as cigarettes, windows, sinks, etcetera. She uses technicians-actors as an extension of the performer's body and finally there is the performer on stage *per se*. She differs from LeCompte, as she has developed a much more explicit and efficient method of deconstructing the actor's presence. She also differs from Lepage's screen-stage system

where theatrical-technological materials undergo a transformation, as she makes a far more pronounced and effective method of organisation of their totality on screen.

In this section, I have identified the major characteristics of the model of directing with technology, which permeate Mitchell's use of technological hybridisation, and contribute to my argument according to which a development seems to occur in the role of the director through the medialities of technology. The key points that characterise the evolution of her directing seems to depend on the shift of the role of the performer into a cameraman, the mediating function of the camera on stage and the resistance of presence. These are a combined grading of screen images in order to create coherent visual sequences and, finally, the formation of a particular system of techno-acting that has developed from Stanislavsky's acting system. The Mitchellian model of technological hybridisation is defined by the cameras' function on stage and the performers' function as cameramen, the hybridisation of the 'resistance of presence' for stage acting, and the image's grading for the creation of a coherent visual narration sequence. Thus, directing with technology has contributed to the emergence of a distinctive type of theatricality that I will analyse in the final section of this chapter charting the development of Mitchell's directorial role.

A CASE-STUDY: ATTEMPTS ON HER LIFE

Since the performance of *Oresteia* (1999) Mitchell had been experimenting with screen projections that illustrated the theatrical aesthetics of a postmodern multi-media

stage. However, in *Attempts on her Life* (2007), her directing changed in order to engage with the aesthetic conventions of inter-mediality and, as a result, her work took a different direction. In this case study of her work it will be possible to trace the continuities in her work, as well as the moments of rupture and the turning points between the different phases of her directorial development. My analysis is based on my original observation of the methodological issues and technical practices that Mitchell employed in her rehearsals, compiled for this thesis for the first time.

I will then provide evidence of how the medialities of technology in her directing, like in the paradigm of *Attempts,* signifies a significant change of her directorial stage language and, consequently, I will argue that this practice mediates a specific theatrical aesthetics and theatricality, or else a specific communication between the stage and the audience. When Mitchell lets the elements, the technological and directorial properties, speak to each other it seems that specific coincidences are produced. In the light of this, the properties of directing and the properties of technology seem to become easily understandable in practice producing a specific dramatic effect of incredible power and wonderment. Therefore, there seems to be an essential connection between directing and technology. I suggest here that the acceptance of the technological marvel by the director is based on symptoms of the directing condition.

Attempts on her Life written by Martin Crimp, has been chosen because it expresses Mitchell's vision of a technology-based model of directing most clearly. It was shown at the Lyttelton theatre and provoked a great reaction from the audience and

critics. *Attempts on her Life*, first performed at the Royal Court in 1997, is a satirical panorama of the political, cultural and social conditions in British society in the 1990s, and was of significant interest to Mitchell since she directed it twice: at the Piccolo Teatro in 1999 and at the Lyttelton in 2007.[654] Mitchell's artistic relationship with the playwright Martin Crimp dates back to 1998 when she was commissioned to direct *Attempts on her Life* at the Piccolo Teatro in Milan with the title *Tracce di Anne*.[655] Since then, Mitchell and Crimp have collaborated many times in the production of Crimp's plays such as *The Country* (2000), *Face to the Wall* (2002), *The City* (2008) and the revival of *Attempts on her Life* in 2007. Crimp has also adapted and translated for Mitchell other plays (*The Maids* (1999) by Jean Genet, *The Seagull* (2006) by Anton Chekhov, *Pains of Youth* (2009) by Ferdinand Bruckner).

Attempts on her Life was first premiered at the Royal Court in 1997 and was hailed as a postmodernist drama. In denying the idea of fixed identity or linear narrative, the play appeals to the modern age, since, as the reviewer Michael Billington has put it, it shows how 'the individual ego is being steadily eroded by a mixture of rampant consumerism, global capitalism and technological advance.'[656] Crimp, as in the famous play by Luigi Pirandello *Six Characters in Search of an Author,* explores the idea of the infinite search for a coherent identity as a popular motive in modern thought and

[654] Royal National Theatre. *Attempts on her Life*. By Martin Crimp. Dir. Katie Mitchell. Lyttelton, London. 14 - 29 March, 2007. Programme.
[655] *Tracce di Anne*. By Martin Crimp. Dir. Katie Mitchell. Piccolo Theatro di Milano, Theatro Studio, Milan, 23 February- 7 March, 1999. Performance. Visual material from this performance of Martin Crimp's, 'Tracce di Anne,' Archivio Multimediale de Piccolo Theatro di Milano, accessed July 16, 2008. <http://archivio.piccoloteatro.org/eurolab/index.php?IDanagrafica=423&tipo=3>.
[656] Michael Billington, 'Attempts on Her Life,' *The Guardian* (Mar. 15, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27. 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 309.

experience.[657] The non-sequential narrative of Crimp's writing requires a distinct directorial treatment and gives a director the opportunity to make a substantial contribution. Mitchell followed the same principle in both productions of the play in 1997 and in 2007, expressing in this way her constant interest in plays that mediate metaphorically the contemporary social-political landscape in a mode of coolness, distance, alienation and grim irony. Consequently, it is important to note her relationship with the texts-libretto as a director, not only to identify the stylistic deconstructive elements, such as for example the extensive use of cameras on stage, as an element irrelevant to the plot itself, meaning that this element presents a contradiction to the plot itself, but also to discern the influence of the notion of a post-commentary directorial style. This approach was used with a variety of artistic genres, novels, theatre, plays and opera as an aesthetic strategy in her latest productions.[658]

Mitchell preferred to use open texts which not only attracted but demanded directorial supplementation. For example, she used novels (*The Waves* by Virginia Woolf published in 1931, *The Idiot* by Fyodor Dostoevsky published in 1868), or librettos (*Dido and Aeneas* by English baroque composer Henri Purcell and libretto by Nahum Tate, in 1689). She chose those texts not only because they offer an amalgamation of descriptive narration, monologues and dialogues which welcome overt

[657] *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (*Sei Personaggi in Cerca d'Autore*) by Luigi Pirandello was published and first performed in 1921. Pirandello Luigi. *Six Characters in Search of an Author and Other Plays*, trans. Mark Musa (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1995), 1-66.

[658] In *After Dido* (2009), for example, the deconstruction of the stage action gives the impression that the director does not support the intentions of the opera-play. It is true that Mitchell's major concern is not to stage the opera itself, but to give the audience an acknowledgement of the power of music over people's lives. Here, Mitchell applies her hybridisable directorial principles for the first time to the operatic genre, and provides a new type of post-directing opera. This intention was clearly declared with the use of the title *After Dido*.

manipulation through technology, such as the series of screen images for the descriptive parts, but also because they incorporate extra narrative elements or auxiliary passages that could effectively support the stage directions and justify the role of technology. Therefore some of her directorial ideas related to the technical aspects of the production, seem to have been developed straight from the text or music (opera) itself. In this respect, technology which at first seems to function as a separate element, that is independent but which presents a contradiction to the text or music itself, finally creates a pseudo-organic totality; in other words, this directorial approach makes effective and acceptable to the audience, the technologically-based reproduction of signs. As a result directing is to be contextualised by mediating a tension between the use of technology and the text or music. On directing *Attempts,* Mitchell says:

> After a lot of discussion, I decided that the most fruitful way of directing the play was to imagine the cast as a group of young writers who had to improvise all the play's scenarios under pressure from an unseen force. So I encouraged the actors to work on the characters of these fictional writers rather than on the various characters who appear in the play... For coherence, we invented these secondary characters who could improvise all the scenarios. For my taste, *Attempts on Her Life* needs this kind of coherent ruling idea. Otherwise, it can fall apart into a series of fragments that confuse the audience.[659]

[659] Aleks Sierz, *The Theatre of Martin Crimp* (London: Methuen Drama, 2006), 198-199.

Under Mitchell's direction, the characters appear as nameless speakers or a group of young writers who talk about a central character, a woman called Anne, Anya, Annie, or Annushka who has a death wish and who never appears on stage. The actors are searching for this character in the mode of narrative-centred theatrical tradition. However, their narration acquires an apparent artificial structure and fictional character, which gradually, explicitly refracts the notion of reality or naturalism through the medialities of technology. At the end we witness how the actors perform versions of Anne's character from their multiple viewpoints (through multiple media platforms). This directorial interpretation contributed to the idea of meta-theatre and therefore contributes to the claim that Mitchell has moved into the postmodern aesthetics.

Mitchell's directorial work with the medialities of technology becomes explicitly interpretative in this play. She interpreted it as a caustic attack on a society obsessed with image and a consumer-celebrity culture. Thus the juxtaposition of performers and images generated by live streaming cameras created a critical relationship with Crimp's text. Mitchell's performance created a spectacle containing an aesthetic revelation of how to see stage/film images and how the deconstruction on the stage and the reconstruction in the film created the play's world, themes and performance's argument. In this way actors on stage improvise all the play's scenarios as in a TV studio (Mitchell's 'coherent ruling idea').

The scenarios are played out in a space which resembles a cluttered TV film set with video screens and lights and cameras constantly hauled about by the ensemble. The

scenes become a new set-up of associations and illustrate a directorial style which creates a live film, a story board or a record album in the sense that it is an interpreted collection of related audio-visual and live-recorded performance tracks/shots distributed on the stage and put together shot by shot or truck by truck in keeping with audio-visual conventions. Thus, Mitchell produces a combination of textocentric elements, stage-centered and multimedial materialistic-oriented' vision of the *mise en scène* and adds an extra layer of meaning to plot and characters.

In contrast with *The Waves* that performed in a small adaptable studio space, the Cottesloe theatre, reflecting Mitchell's early preferences, she presented *Attempts* in the Lyttelton theatre space which had great implications for her directing. The Lyttelton stage is cavernous and fully technologically equipped. Therefore, the perception of the audience is fundamentally different from their tentative participation in a small black-box studio-space like the Cottesloe in which the audience's visual focal point of a small-place physical activity on stage remains constant delivering a high emotional and cognitive experience. This gave rise to justifiable concerns that the delicacy and imaginative ambiguity of this type of performance in the vast exposure of the Lyttelton stage might be lost. According to Pavis's 'site venue theory'[660] the site venue is a primary element in analysing a performance: *Attempts on her Life* created a fast tempo effect in the large space provided at the Lyttelton theatre termed as 'megalomania' in Pavis; fast tempo in a small space such as the Cottesloe theatre, is termed 'excitability' by the same theatre scholar.

[660] Patrice Pavis, *Analyzing Performance*, 162.

After the premier of the *Attempts* the critics invented the verb 'to Mitchellise', and the noun 'Mitchellisation', as well as its derogatory version 'Mitchellitis'[661] to characterise Mitchell's latest style of theatre direction, which, as Michael Caines put it, 'leaves some people cold and makes others swoon'.[662] It is always exciting when theatre provokes passionate responses and there is no doubt that Mitchell's directing has become an important part of British theatre history, although she is clearly capable of dividing her audience. She has stamped her signature in spite of comments such as that from Maxie Szalwinska: 'Does this [type of theatre] make Mitchell a visionary or simply a narcissist? As with all true mavericks, I suspect there's a necessary bit of both.' [663] The above comments are related to the incidence of this type of directing in the Lyttelton stage compared to the Cottesloe theatre. Given the experimental nature of the Cottesloe auditorium, with its smaller running costs and associated financial pressures, this space is often preferred by directors to the larger and less flexible Lyttleton space.

However, the Mitchellian school demands a specific perception that National Theatre audiences seem to find difficult to develop. It requires an audience that has been deeply influenced by the TV and film-making process, which is fundamental in order to be able to engage in an informed critique. It could, therefore, be defined as a kind of

[661] Nicholas De Jongh, 'A dreadful form of directorial embellishment', *Evening Standard* (Mar. 15, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27: 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 309.
[662] Michael Caines, 'Guardian Blog', *Guardian*, October 18, 2007, accessed June 18, 2008. <http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/authors/michael_caines/>.
[663] Maxie Szalwinska, *Metro London* (Mar. 16, 2007), reproduced in *London Theatre Record* 27: 6 (Mar. 12-25, 2007): 310.

anti-theatre linked with the experimental neo-avant-garde movement. According to Günter Berghaus the avant-garde artist 'seeks to open up a terrain for … innovations to take place'. As a result the avant-garde artist attempts to 'provoke radical change before others see a need for it'.[664] The 'Mitchellian school' has provoked an aesthetic debate in theatrical cycles by using the potential of technology and falls into the neo-avant-garde arena.

The obstacles that Mitchell came up against were twofold: the rejection of video as a valid medium for the theatre by part of the audience and the perception that much of what she presents on stage is intended to be unsatisfying and disturbing because it does not belong to the theatrical habitat. However, it could be argued that everything automatically gains theatricality when you put it on stage and that theatre has the freedom to turn to new materials. It may be that the real difficulty in watching Mitchell's extremely orchestrated, technically sophisticated staging stem from the fact that, in its very nature, it is repetitive and alienating especially performed in a more traditionally huge space like the Lyttelton. Once again, this is a common charge levelled against all experimental avant-gardists who break new ground. The 'shock, shake and shatter' effect on the audience is part of Mitchell's director's theatre although the work of LeCompte and Lepage documented above shows that this is not really new or terribly shocking.

[664] Berghaus, *Avant-Garde Performance*, *Live Events and Electronic Technologies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 17.

A full definition of 'director's theatre' or 'auterism' has been provided by Gabrielle Cody, who defines it as an embrace which holds 'the subjectivity of symbolic theatre languages' and favours the 'plurivocal fragmentation of the image-text-sound' over the 'realism's seamless, unified, and outwardly intelligible staging of an experience'.[665] What we can see in Mitchell is a personal symbolic stage language which animates a specific directing plot mechanism or shape of directing. Despite the fact that it focuses exclusively on the 'plurivocal fragmentation of the image-text-sound' through the manipulation of the multimedia on stage, at the same time, it supports realism's seamless, unified, and outwardly intelligible staging of an experience. Her *mise en scène* is organised around the symbolic exchange of two basic channels of representation or languages: the screen and the stage.

This type of 'directing plot mechanism' or 'shape of directing' becomes subservient to a complicated network of underlined structural relations between text, film and performance which are inseparable and do not have traditional hierarchies to govern the production. This directorial manipulation sometimes has as a result of turning the performance into a self-conscious post-commentary on the creation itself (meta-communication) and of 'the process' of creating an alternative reality through the theatrical medium/mediator. Ideas of the deconstruction of genres-mediums and the artificial, superficial, essentially constructed nature of the means of representation in the theatrical environment, through the exposure of the mechanisms of the procession of

[665] Schneider and Cody, eds., *Re: Direction*, 126.

filmic images and the apparatus of cinematic representation, are central to Mitchell's recent 'directing plot mechanism' or 'shape of directing'.

It is important to note here that all the production programmes have explicitly stated that the productions were 'directed by Mitchell and the company'.[666] This is not a manifestation of largesse but reflects the actual collective character of the production. As with LeCompte and Lepage, her work could only be realised with the collaboration of an ensemble. Mitchell's ensemble shares the credit of the directorial rank among the group, with more or less equal contributions from all members of the creative team. This intention was freely declared under the umbrella of the UK's National Theatre, suggesting that the famous organisation shares a common vision with the group: the vision of forcing theatre practice to evolve. Therefore, in all these works (*Waves*, *Attempts on her Life*, *...some trace of her*, *After Dido*) Mitchell has worked very closely with a selection of collaborators who apart from the set designer Vicki Mortimer, included Paul Constable (lighting designer), Gareth Fry (sound designer), Leo Warner (director of photography), as well as, a permanent ensemble of skilful, expert and unhesitating actors, such as Kate Duchene, Anastasia Hille, Liz Kettle, Helena Lymbery, Michael Gould, Paul Ready, and Jonah Russell.

[666] See Royal National Theatre. *The Waves*. From the Text of Virginia Woolf's Novel 'The Waves'. Dir. Katie Mitchell. Royal National Theatre, Cottesloe, London. 16 November 2006 - 8 January 2007 and 20 August - 9 September 2008. Programme. Royal National Theatre. ... *some trace of her*. Inspired by the Idiot by Fyodor Dostoevsky. Dir. Katie Mitchell. Royal National Theatre. Royal National Theatre, Cottesloe, London. 30 July - 21 October 2008. Programme.

I have termed Mitchell's directorial mode technological hybridisation. The promenade-style of the production of the play *Attempts* allows the exploration of Mitchell's latest mode of directing with technology through the analysis of specific scenes. In the scenario-scene 'Faith in Ourselves', a woman (Kate Duchêne) in a black cocktail dress, sits on a chair in the middle of the stage. The audience can see her bare back which is lit. Another actor is filming her with the camera, simulating the role of the technician. There is a conventional medium long shot of her, and a lower frame line which cuts off her feet and ankles projected on the screen. The woman turns around steadily so one can get a close-up of either her face or her bare back being filmed by the other actor, who in turn functions as cameraman. This technique gives the impression that the subject, the woman in this case, has been separated from her immediate environment something which can be interpreted within the social and cultural logic of media spectacle. The actors on stage are filming like a technical crew in a TV studio and here Mitchell clearly makes the point that events in a modern society only acquire meaning if they are mediatised, reflecting on Auslander's notion that 'the live' on stage is dependent on its opposite 'the recorded'.[667] Additionally, the close-ups of the female head, well-shaped neck, back and shoulder aestheticises the female body by depicting it in an idealised artistic manner. This seems to be Mitchell's ironic commentary on the fetishisation of female icons through the process of mediatisation, or else media's masculine erotic gaze on the female object. Mitchell's techno-directing raises issues concerned with the application of new media technology on images, mediating a type of techno-feminism. Then, a group of actors take their places up stage right and left so they

[667] Auslander, *Liveness*, 51.

are facing each other. It is very obvious at this point that the play does not have a specific plot or real characters but is based on a non-sequential narrative. However, the impression is of a conversational type of narrative. Two cameras are used to film the two groups and the images of the two groups of actors are united on screen in such a way as to give the impression that they have been placed in a continuous chorus line and are looking at each other as if they were in a straight line in an illusion of reality (a type of total theatre).

There is a clear reference here to Baudrillard and his ideas. Baudrillard questioned the status of the images around us. Baudrillard's idea that the 'Gulf War did not take place', because it consisted almost entirely of TV images that stood in for reality, is widely known. He crucially points out that:

> The era of simulation is inaugurated by the liquidation of all referentials - worse: with their artificial resurrection in the systems of signs, a material more malleable than meaning [...] It is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real, that is to say of an operation of deterring every real process via its operational double, a programmatic, metastable, perfectly descriptive machine that offers all the signs of the real and short-circuits all its vicissitudes. [668]

In this way he argues that reality is conducted at the level of the simulacrum.[669] Mitchell, after examining phases of realism within theatrical representation heritage, seems to shift her directing from the Stanislavskian stage acting system to a realism

[668] Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulations*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1994), 2.
[669] The notion of simulation is used for the analysis of new media and the notion of representation for the analysis of the old media. As a result there is a shift in the visual image from the notion of representation to the notion of simulation.

within the context of media representations and a shift to simulations. As a result, she demonstrates explicitly how technology or technology's medialities are crucially part of the real. In this way technology is a dynamic conveyor of realistic content and knowledge, so history and memory are manipulated by media technology.

In the same scene 'Faith in ourselves', a woman, seen in close up on the screen, is smoking a cigarette. There is a sequence of shots of the woman and the two groups which function as reaction shots. This follows the conventional TV grammar according to which actors are shown reacting to another actor's action or to an event supposedly witnessed by the reacting character(s). However, this is clearly a TV style editing illusion, since the actual position of the woman and the position of the two groups on the set do not allow this. As a result, Mitchell, instead of causing communication, seems to stage communication and meaning, through cultural artefacts (such as technologically generated images which work in a less hierarchical order like hypertexts) performing in a post-communication style of theatrical directing or a 'post-dramatic theatre' according to Lehmann. Here there is a shift from the workings of representation to the workings of remediation in her directing. The continuous process of exposing the modes of deconstruction on stage in a post-Pirandellian 'search of a character', and the modes of reconstruction through the screen seems to operate at an aesthetic level by marking Mitchell's new distinctive hybrid directorial style. The reality might simply not exist, or exist differently, since it takes place only through the media and governed by them. Her use of conventional TV grammar in this scene for structuring the action seems to belong

to a shifting phase of inter-mediality. As a result the conditions under which her directing is enacted change.

In the scenario-scene 'Untitled (100 Words)', three screens descend to form a visual triptychon that dominates the space and creates three different settings for the action to unfold simultaneously. Images are projected on the triptychon which functions as a cinema or TV frame. Mitchell's compositional structure follows the conventional TV principle and events take place at the same time. For example, on one screen there is an image of a woman who looks directly in the camera with air blowing through her hair and moon-water reflections on her face, visual effects produced live by other actors using a reflector board, and imitating the role of a TV/film technical crew. This gives the impression that she is jumping from a cliff edge. On the other screen, the woman is lying dead while we hear a dramatic classical aria. On the third, there is a fire set in a bucket while an actor (Liz Kettle) foleys the sound of fire with some gel in a plastic bag. The scene has a dramatic mood similar to a TV drama narrative with rapid cuttings, sound bites, and 'cry and sigh' formula imagery. This directorial practice mediates that the emphasis of realistic details (a key concept of Mitchell's directing) through the use of the multimedia can shift to a type of mediatised hysterical realism adding a hyper-realistic level to the directorial plot revealing a double logic (as in the case of remediation) that produces simultaneously a hybrid theatrical effect towards the production of a postmodern poetic realism.

A further screen simulates the setting of a talk show in the manner of *The Late Show* (the popular CBS TV talk show). The whole scene is constructed by this logic: the juxtaposition between the compositions of beautifully shot images related to different versions of Anne's attempts on her own life which is the subject of interest, and the rapid transition to a post commentary related to this subject by a television panel, in another locus. This rapid transition, from one shot to another, from one segment to the other, give the impression of a TV channel switching and zapping creating a rapidly changing rhythm and a mediatised flow. Here, Mitchell directly addresses a televisually literate audience.

Anne's 'attempts', under the microscopic focus of the camera's lenses, awaken narcissistic, fetishistic, and voyeuristic psychological feelings in the audience mechanisms as if they are watching the final moments of a character's life and witnessing her death. However, Mitchell disrupts this mesmerising effect of emotionally engaged acting by changing the focus to the set of the talk show. In this way she seems to acknowledge that the construction of the TV images of Anne's attempts on her life seem to acquire a complete meaning only through the showing of a subsidiary system, the mass media talk show.

In the scenario-scene 'Kinda Funny' the discourse between the screen and stage actor's presence is further explored. A man is sitting on a chair, smoking and talking to the camera. In a set opposite to him another actor is throwing the ashes in an ashtray that is also filmed by a camera operated by an actor-cameraman. In a series of

juxtapositions of shots, from the eye-level shot of the man who is actually smoking, to the grand close-up shot of the second man's hand above the ashtray, details seem to appear enlarged in an artificial reality as the rapid sequence of shots give the illusion that only one person is moving and smoking.

The two actors move simultaneously in a synchronous interaction; at a second level their presence is mediatised with the contribution of another actor as cameraman and, finally, there is the synthesis of all the factors on the screen. All the above add up to a hybrid fragmented-unified theatrical presence. As a result, a series of metaphorical interrelationships are established between the stage and the filming media or the human and the technology. In the above scene Mitchell seems to use the medialities of technology to give the impression of a resistance of presence for the action on the stage and the impression of a humanised technology or the re-creation of the emotion for the action on the screen. Her directing was beginning to take a very distinct line in her relationship with and use of technology on the stage. Examining the paradigm of Katie Mitchell's directing has assisted me in developing not only a discussion of the various manifestations of directorial approaches in the theatrical environment, but also in gathering further evidence for my identification of a development in the role of the theatre director.

THEATRICALITY AND THE MEDIALITIES OF TECHNOLOGICAL HYBRIDISATION IN MITCHELL'S DIRECTING

Mitchell's directing with technology has followed a historical trajectory from the notion of mediality to multi-mediality and inter-mediality and thus her theatricality in a postmodern Stanislavskian theatre is also evolving. The theatricality of the cyberpunk 'jungle' that constitutes Mitchell's techno-iconocentric perspective for structuring the action on stage, following LeCompte's established principle, is combined with more coherent icon-imagery structures, visual compositions or stage narration through the totality of video, reflecting a notion already established by Lepage, which unifies the discrete mediatised units projected on the screen. Mitchell, with her hybrid model seems to support both tendencies by creating novel relational concepts in the theatrical environment. This means that in her model, the mediality of technology has enhanced the impression of deconstruction on behalf of the stage action (heterogeneity, separation, dispersion) anti-synergically, while, at the same time, it has succeeded in faking reality and being conceived of as a reality/realistic action through the construction on screen of a totality (homogeneity, fusion, convergence) synergically.

Her model has achieved the transparency of different acting systems (psychophysical actor training, alienation effect) with the help of the technological apparatus (camera and screen) on stage. The mediality of the mediatisation puts emphasis on the performing activity. Therefore, a shift has taken place from the perceptual impression of notions such as the immediacy of the performer, with the

immediate transmission of meaning, or the structural principles of a cause-and-effect relationship with one element being after-each-other, to the drawing of attention to the devices of the composition of the presence, from the modes of representation to the modes of simulation, or else, reflecting to Bolter and Grusin's type of double logic, such as the immediacy-hypermediacy model. In short, it is the structural notion of having several elements next-to-each-other with a relative independence at the same time from each other (post-Brechtian aesthetics), which through mediatisation are enacted to mediate a totality (post-Wagnerian aesthetics) and specifically an illusion of reality (post-Stanislavskian aesthetics). She has presented the technological tools/devices, for example the operation of the camera, as an integral part of the performer's physicality and action on stage, in the formation of an organic body-screen-camera-sound effects hybrid (performers' visible hybrid ontology), contributing significantly to the formation of the character's subjectivity (a four dimensional subjectivity), or else she presents a kind of a hybridisation of technology's *dis*embodiment-*em*bodiment bridging the gap between the two.

The main principle in Mitchell's work is the 'mood-oriented' technology-based effects (mood-oriented design, lighting, sound, video) in a play. This mood-creation which enhances aspects of Stanislavskian method has been evident throughout her career and expresses Mitchell's theatrical style (an illusion of reality). However, the turning point in her work is her decision to apply this to technological media. Mitchell instructs her designers to follow 'the needs of the actors on stage' and to change every time that 'there is a dramatic change' in a mood-creation which stems from

technology.[670] Therefore, we can see clearly that the guiding principles behind Mitchell's directing have begun to shift: from the Stanislavskian principle of requiring actors to play their motivation changes, to a methodology of using the same principles for guiding her designers and technologists mediating a post-Stanislavskian aesthetics.

Setting, sound, lighting, and video follow 'motivation changes' according to the circumstances in which the actor/character finds themselves on stage. So the analytical psychological approach to acting shifts to the technological means, rooted in the actors' imagination and reaction. Mitchell explained, for example, that when the actor hears the shift in a musical tone, sound effect, they respond automatically and emotionally with the analogous psychological-based reaction.[671] Consequently she guides her designers to pay attention to these dramatic changes and the embodiment and transmission of emotions in the play. I argue that Mitchell's current directorial mark has shifted to combine clarity with the intensity of feeling not only through acting, but also through the use of the technological medium.

In addition, there is an argument that Mitchell reflects LeCompte's practice by 'fragmentary technology' on stage. The elusive, puzzling, uncertain, inexhaustible forms or rearrangements of the performance space and the deconstruction of actor's presence with the aid of cameras and foley techniques have apparent links to LeCompte.

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[670] Mitchell, Katie. *In Discussion. Interviewed by Andy Lavender*. Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London, London, 14 October 2008 and Young Vic, London, 16 April 2009.

[671] Katie Mitchell was interviewed by Andy Lavender, at the Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London, (London, October 14, 2008) in which I took part by posing questions. See details on the theory of emotions in: Katie Mitchell, *The Director's Craft: A Handbook for Theatre* (London, New York: Routledge, 2009), 154-156 and 231-232.

At the same time, using film and classic realistic text as a uniform structure reflects Lepage's 'totalising technology' practice. The live film production of a text, where the narration and storytelling dominate, suggests a unifying-totalising notion of the use of technology. The manipulation of the visual pleasure of the audience, which derives from filmic codes and techniques, shifts to a level of voyeuristic and narcissistic scopophilia. In this way, actors are 'objects' subjected to a controlling filmic fetishistic gaze that gives the impression of a unitary aesthetic totality.

Katie Mitchell has directed in the National Theatre since 1994 (*Rutherford and Son*, 1994; *Machine Wreckers*, 1995) while Richard Eyre was an artistic director at the National Theatre from 1988 to 1997. It was also during Eyre's directorship that Robert Lepage was commissioned to present in the National Theatre performances - *Needles and Opium*, 1992, *A Midsummer's Night Dream*, 1992, and *Elsinore*, 1997 - which created a vibrant debate among the critics. The overlap of those two directors in the National Theatre during the time when the authority of a particular artistic director established an artistically dynamic profile by supporting the work of younger directors, seems to have been consequential in constructing Mitchell's directorial identity. This co-location of Lepage and Mitchell in the same institution seems to suggest a convincing influence on her work, however, it was under Nicholas Hytner's Artistic Directorship at the National Theatre when Mitchell's work reached its most experimental phase in the use of technology since Hytner, who is himself a film director, as well as a theatre director, favoured multimedial theatre genres.

For Mitchell technology seems to function symbiotically (ecology), meaning anti-synergically for the stage by developing an autonomous character and, simultaneously, synergically for the screen revealing a kind of coherence provided by mood-oriented technology-based effects. This methodological choice also demonstrates that Mitchell's work seems to fall somewhere in-between the two attitudes, LeCompte's directorial attitude and Lepage's, creating a hybriditised directorial dialectic.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on an investigation of the role of technology in the developmental identity of the theatre director Katie Mitchell. In this chapter, I introduced Mitchell's history, ideology and aesthetics and on the basis of these findings I have concluded that Mitchell's directing fastidiously underlined a detailed realism, something which has remained her constant directorial signature for many years. I have referred to a production, *Oresteia* (2000) that prepared the ground for a radical change in her directing. In this production Mitchell's directing was unequivocally dependent on a set of multi-medial technological properties. The essential directorial principles had been: acting based on physiological realism displayed through a film's face topography, association of the classic text with contemporary political events through the use of TV-news style slights/images, a gloomy atmosphere through a chilly spacious setting, and an amalgamation of realistic and hyper-realistic details through the use of cameras. From this moment Mitchell

began to forge a directorial identity which deviated from her previous tendencies under the influences of the notion of multi-mediality.

Next I referred to the directing model of technological hybridisation. I have identified the three basic points about this model, which I have acknowledged in the work of Mitchell: firstly, an evolution of the performer to the role of the technical operator, second the evolution of the stage narration from the pure stage psychological realism to the borrowing of multimedia and new media techniques (mediators) to unfold the stage action. Finally, the evolution of acting from the immediacy of realism to a hybridisation of distancing mechanisms in the direction of a deconstruction of presence on stage and a simultaneous reconstruction of this presence on the screen. Therefore, via the medialities of technology the Mitchellian model of technological hybridisation focused on the key idea of 'mood-oriented' technology that expanded the Stanislavskian method. This enabled a reading of the change in Mitchell's directorial role to one that combined clarity with intensity of feeling through the technological medium.

One can conclude on the basis of the above findings that the evolution of a specific director's theatre is interrelated not only to the continuities of the historical influences, ideology and aesthetics in the career of the director, such as the progress of the element of the psychological realism in Mitchell's paradigm, but also has emerged within specific moments of rupture and turning points in her directing. However, the turning point in her work was her decision to apply and expand this directorial practice to the medialities of the technological media, the phase of multi-mediality and inter-

mediality. Mitchell instructed her designers to follow 'the needs of the actors on stage' and to change every time that 'there is a dramatic change' in a mood-creation which stems from technology.[672] Therefore, we can see clearly that the guiding principles behind Mitchell's directing began to shift from the Stanislavskian principle of requiring actors to play their motivation changes, to a methodology of using the same principles for guiding her designers, agents of technology-based applications.

There is also evidence that Mitchell reflected on LeCompte's practice by supporting the practice of fragmentary technology in stage action and narration. The elusive, puzzling, uncertain, inexhaustible forms or rearrangements of the performance space and the deconstruction of actor's presence with the aid of cameras and foley techniques have apparent links to LeCompte's directing model. At the same time, using film and classic realistic text as a uniform structure I argue, reflects some of Lepage's 'totalising technology' practice. This distinct type of engagement between LeCompte's 'fragmentary technology' and Lepage's 'totalising technology' is an indication of the nature of the technological hybridisation of Mitchell's model. The fact that one can identify in Mitchell's work, as primary motivation, the discovery of an augmented creative potentiality for the stage, explicitly inherent in the technological medium/mediator, further suggests that there is a strong relationship between her directing and technology. They can manage to speak the same language supporting in this way a distinctive type of theatricality, meaning that locating the technological meta-language on the art of directing reveals the meanings or the atmosphere that the

[672] Katie Mitchell '*In Discussion: Interviewed by Andy Lavender'* (London, Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London, 14 October 2008), Personal notes.

directing is intending to convey, or else the way that technology relates to the notion of theatricality (the notion of technology as metalanguage that I have analysed before in the Chapter One).

Mitchell absorbed influences from LeCompte's fragmentary technology' and Lepage's 'totalising technology' in order to create a hybridisation of the qualities of both models. The directing model of technological hybridisation communicates a dialectic that combines intellect and criticism, as well as senses and emotionalism shaping, in this way, a specific theatricality. As with LeCompte and Lepage, the more technology developed in her work, the more her role as a director developed too and seemed to grow in order to match the changes in the medialities of technology.

CONCLUSION

The focal enquiry of this thesis has been the link between technology and directing through a study of the production and theatricality of specific models of directing. This thesis has presented what is argued to be an inextricable link between directing and technology in the theatrical environment i.e. the stage environment, performance environment or theatrical habitus. By providing relevant evidence and by giving an account of and the reasons for the widespread use of technology by three contemporary theatre directors, it is a contribution to the study of how the role of theatre directors can change, shift and develop. The central argument is that the use of technology can now be considered as a natural extension to the art of directing, and that there is a relationship of cause and effect between technology and directing. By this I mean that I have observed in the course of the present research, case-related and systematic directorial needs, historically and theoretically articulated, which originated in the nineteenth century, an era during which the rise of the role of the director and the spread of technology in the theatre coincided, and which has given rise to just such a relationship.

The thesis makes a contribution to theatre scholarship by analysing the medialities produced by the three directors' use of the technological medium/mediator and examining the implications of these for the change, shift and development of the role of the theatrical director. My analysis of key scenes has been based on my personal

attendance at all the most recent productions of the directors concerned, as well as my participation in rehearsals and the early stages of production for the work of the directors Katie Mitchell and Robert Lepage. I sought, and hope to have contributed to redressing the balance in this area of scholarship by paving the way for a full comparison of the basic principles for explicit models of directing with technology, in the same way as studies of models of directing with acting systems have been developed in past scholarship. The main difference in my approach is that it focuses primarily on the technological material aspects of a production. The contribution the present thesis seeks to make lies in clearly relating the evolution of directing not only with acting styles and systems, choices in repertory, or aspects of identity based on critical theories, as other researchers have already done, but by examining theatrical aesthetics. These can be described as production of style and dramatic effects, and theatricality or audience experience which emerges from analysing the relationship between the art of the director and their actions with the technological material.

In Chapter One of this thesis, my methodological starting point has been to incorporate references to the paradigms of directors whose work engages technology in a theoretical as well as a dramatic manner. The theory can be summarised as follows: technology *is* directing or alternately technology *mediates* the art of directing. That means that whenever there is an occurrence of technology in the theatrical environment, I have handled this as a condition of directing. Thus, the development of the role of the director and the shape of their directorial identity in this thesis points towards its roots in the use of technology.

The evidence of the medialities of technology, from the point of view of the art of theatre directing, began with a hierarchical relationship (mediality), shifted historically to an interrelational link (multi-mediality), and has today reached the state of symbiosis or ecology (inter-mediality) as noted in Chapter One. The emergence of this symbiotic relationship or ecology has meant that technology has become an integral part of the directorial logic and modus operandi, and carries with it significant implications for the directorial identity.

Additionally, in Chapter One, I have identified how directorial work was initially inspired by the advances in technology, but then went on to point out how the effective incorporation of technology in the finished production began to amplify theatricality itself.[673] It is this phenomenon, the representations on stage through a given technological medium that has promoted theatrical aesthetics and theatricality. Therefore, in the director's theatre the receptiveness of the audience has been enhanced through the technological medium and mediator, and the directors have been genuinely concerned with producing an aesthetic experience.

Chapters Two, Three and Four present the career trajectory of the work of three practitioners: Elizabeth LeCompte, Robert Lepage and Katie Mitchell. In order to classify these directors as representative of a directors' theatre, I have grouped and

[673] When I refer to technology as a concept I note that there have been theatre visionaries who could not use technology as much as they wanted to because of the time they lived in and the limitations in technological progress back then, e.g. Edward Gordon Craig.

named their practice on the basis of something that they have in common: the aspects of technological medialities in their work.[674] I have drawn conclusions about certain qualities and features which they share and examined the influences of their respective particular backgrounds, ideologies on their directing, their continuities or issues of continuity and their development in the use of technology in their directing.[675] My emphasis has been on the shaping of their directorial identity through the use of technology in order to substantiate the arguments expressed in Chapter One.

Chapter Two examines the directorial work of Elizabeth LeCompte. The examination of LeCompte's production *Brace Up!* (1991), an adaptation of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, has identified her distinctive staging features and provided examples for her use of technology. In this production, there was a clear shift in her work towards multi-mediality and post-Brechtian aesthetics. Chapter Two followed the development of technology-related technological interventions in LeCompte's *Hamlet* production (2006, 2007). I have termed this model of directing fragmentary technology.

In Chapter Three, I turned to the director-creator Robert Lepage. He also used technology, enabling a shifting point of view through multi-mediality, as is evident in his production of *Elsinore* (1996), an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. The second example of Lepage's work *Lipsynch* (2008) revealed his shift from the fusion of interdisciplinary elements as a means of a dynamic directing, to the use of virtuality,

[674] The use of technology in their work.
[675] By continuity here I am referring to continuity regarding the use of certain elements that are present throughout their whole directorial practice, for example the element of deconstruction in LeCompte, physical theatre in Lepage and realism in Mitchell.

remediation and transcoding. I have referred to this stage in his directorial development as that of totalising technology indicating a shift to the notion of inter-mediality.

In Chapter Four, I examined Katie Mitchell's directorial trademarks as a director-creator. Using the example of her production of *Oresteia* (1999) by Aeschylus, I have identified how Mitchell enhanced her staging features using technological multi-mediality, as this was her main resource for indicating contemporary social-political backgrounds, as well as asserting her actors' presence and authority. For Mitchell the passage from the condition of mediality to multi-mediality was mainly established through her use of film documentary to create an intertextual performance. The most striking results in Mitchell's directing have emerged from her transition from multi-mediality to inter-mediality. These innovations are explored in Chapter Four in her production of Crimp's play *Attempts on her Life* (2007) where it is possible to see a phase in her directorial development where she matches the changes in the medialities of technology with her own directing.

This research has produced several original and significant findings in directorial technique and in terminology: I have introduced fragmentary technology as the aesthetic outcome of the extensive use of technology on stage that has the characteristics of deconstruction, fragmentation, and multiplication. The examples of this were found in the work of LeCompte. I defined totalising technology in Lepage as a fusion of acting, storytelling and technology, which gives the audience the impression of being constantly in motion and of being emotionally involved. Technological hybridisation, as

it is used by Mitchell, evokes, on one hand, the deconstruction of the stage action and, on the other, the totality of a poetic naturalism reconstructed on the screen. The case studies provide evidence of the diversity of the directors' approach to the use of technology, how radically technology shifts their identity and how it becomes a fundamental medium for the director's vision.

There are further research findings that can be identified at this point. First, I have argued that a major shift takes place in directorial roles once an additional substantial factor, technology and its agents, namely the stage machinery, multi-medial, inter-medial technologies and the technology-based collaborators, are introduced to work in an aesthetic way by mediating the directors' staging philosophy and theatricality.

I have also identified similarities in the work and development of the three selected directors which support my thesis: All three directors rely crucially on a range of collaborators who are experts on technological issues. These collaborators have been upgraded to co-creators as opposed to their traditional role as the facilitators or backstage hands of a performance. The directors have connected particular qualities of the performance, such as distinctive dramatic effects, with the role of the new technicians and included them to a significant extent to enhance the audience experience and perception of the performance. Paradoxically, besides this new type of enhanced collectivism, the role of the director seems to have become more powerful and dominant than ever: the director directs rather than controls these days. This means that the director as creator no longer masters the production as an absolutist, authoritarian and

autocrat. Control has transferred to collaborators as co-creators and the director's work is highlighted today as the point of arrival for all the other co-creators' ideas.

In addition, is the fact that directors seem to incorporate more sophisticated technology into their theatre-making process in order to innovate a performance for a new audience, although the performance created as a result of mediation by technology does not have the aim of completely removing former conventional directorial achievements, for example acting systems, or dramaturgy. All three directors have appeared to shake the passive mainstream audience's reception within the theatre-making system. Their performances have challenged conventional expectations and demanded different perceptions, which mainstream audiences have had difficulties in developing. However, all three directors are addressing an audience which is film-TV-video-computer literate; and in some cases addressing a new generation of spectators who are experienced in more technological developments in text, images, audio, and animation, in a non-linear web of associations.

There are appeals to gaming and interactive fiction derived from the mediatised culture, for example the environments in which players use text commands to control characters and influence the action. All three directors seek to address a new generation of audience who are experienced with the computer's increasing effectiveness in becoming a more sophisticated text and audio-visual manipulator. These audiences seem to respond to LeCompte, Lepage and Mitchell's directorial universe and easily engage with the apprehension of alternative modes of spectatorship. What is also

impressive, is that all three directors quickly exploited the representational possibilities opened up by technology in order to generate novel kinds of theatrical engagement and to achieve a direct communication with their audience. For this reason, technological tools, such as video projections, seem to have more immediacy as well as a more active presence in their directing.

This thesis has also revealed that as the dialectical confrontation between technology and directing challenged already established directorial practices, the new technological agents had to interrelate with a 'post' phase of surviving traditional theatrical aesthetics such as the notion of total theatre termed here as a post-Wagnerian aesthetics, the theatre of estrangement termed here as post-Brechtian aesthetics, and the theatre of realism termed here as post-Stanislavskian aesthetics. This produced an experience for the audience of either fragmentary, or totalising technology, or technological hybridisation depending on the director concerned, in order for the director to create a work of art. Directorial elements such as time, space, body and image seem to operate according to a trajectory leading from a phase of mediality to a phase of multi-mediality and, finally, to a phase of inter-mediality. In all three directors' work there is a movement from the state of borrowing and juxtaposing multi-medial practices to a state of mutating or remediating inter-medial practices. However, elements of the multi-medial phase seem to continue to coexist with the ones inherent to the innovative inter-medial stage. Directing seems to draw from the evolution of technology's medialities towards a special synthesis of the theatrical i.e.acting, and dramaturgy, and technological agents.

In *Theatre Ecology* Baz Kershaw has explored how theatre, performance and ecology may work together. For Kershaw, 'theatre ecology' refers to the relationships of all the factors of particular theatrical performance systems, including their organic and non-organic components ranging from the smallest and simplest, to the greatest or more complex. In my view, this analogy of ecology could also include directing and technology under the influence of sequence of factors, such as the directorial trajectory from mediality to multi-mediality and inter-mediality, to produce the current state of directing. The directors concerned demonstrate that the more technology develops, the more their role of director must develop as well. The three directors have also challenged traditional thinking related to terms such as technological and theatrical by suggesting that those notions are not already pre-determined and firmly locked concepts; having offered new possibilities of dealing with these in the theatrical environment. By exploring particular ways of blending technology with theatre, they have all produced individual directorial signatures. They have generated a renewed sense of theatre directing as a forum for vibrant discussion and debate and a new terrain of theatre directing.

But how have the three directing models managed to produce different theatricality? My frame of reference and the basis for this comparison is how differently LeCompte, Lepage, and Mitchell have used the medialities of technology in their productions both in form and content and how technology shifts diverse types of theatricality in their work, and provides diverse multiple dramatic effects that shape the

audience's impressions. Finally, this comparison reveals how the above forces of change help them to develop a different directorial identity.

This techno-iconocentrism that mirrors contemporary techno-culture is carried out by formalist narratives via technology, either through an icon-imagery of a cyberpunk urban 'jungle' such as in the case of LeCompte, or through the characteristic of a high-tech minimalism such as in the case of Lepage, and provides a formalist vision of a *techno-mise en scène*.[676] This approach has been chosen by all three directors because it creates either an intently unstable arbitrary meaning for the play (LeCompte) or underlines an emotional meaning-driven directing that gives the impression of a coherent cause-effect relationship (Lepage). Additionally, and finally, the cyberpunk 'jungle' that conclusively constitutes Mitchell's techno-iconocentric perspective for structuring the action on stage, which follows LeCompte's established principle of arbitrary meaning, is combined with more coherent icon-imagery structures, visual compositions or stage narration through the totality of video, reflecting a notion already established in Lepage, that unifies the separate mediatised units projected on the screen.

The employment of technology seems to have the strong potential to convey the impression of a heterogeneous (LeCompte) or a homogenous theatrical aesthetic (Lapage). Technology seems to suggest either a separation, dispersion and scattering of the theatrical elements and media, or emphasises the specificity of the media used

[676] According to Aleksandar Dundjerović this symbiosis of technology with the performer's live action in space could be termed as 'techno en scène'. Aleksandar Saŝa Dundjerović, *The Theatricality of Robert Lepage* (Montreal; Kingston; London and Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 180.

(LeCompte) or a fusion, convergence thereof (Lepage). It also seems to confer either the dramatic effect of detachmentor alienation (LeCompte) or immersion and totality (Lapage). Mitchell with her hybrid model seems to support both tendencies by creating novel relational concepts in the theatrical environment. In her model, the materiality of technology has enhanced the impression of deconstruction for the stage action characterised by heterogeneity, separation, and dispersion, while, at the same time, it has succeeded in faking reality and being conceived as a realistic action through the construction on screen of a totality characterised by homogeneity, fusion, and convergence.

Additionally, the focus for the investigation has been an attempt to establish specific technology-based mediators. It is true that the presence of the technical manager/technician/technical operator as a performer on stage visible to the audience has a determining significance for the function of all three models of directing with technology, but how does it suggest different shifting paradigms of theatricality? LeCompte, in her production of *Hamlet*, used technicians off stage in the auditorium, who were however visible to the audience, and were interacting with the performers and influencing the dramaturgy of the play. Lepage, in *Lipsynch*, presented technicians on stage interacting with the performers, physically influencing the stage narration, but *without* interrupting the dramaturgy of the play. Finally, Mitchell, in the production *Attempts on her Life*, presented actors as technicians who, even though they did not interrupt the flow of the play's dramaturgy, significantly facilitated the physical stage action by constructing and reconstructing the stage-screen's narration, enhancing the

impression of flow, as well as the idea that the technical apparatus had become an extension of the actor's body. This is a noteworthy development during the post-Stanislavskian process towards 'the building of a character'.

In answer to my research question, the shifting paradigm of 'remediation' in the three directors' directing, in relation to the role of the technician, can be distinguished. This means that there is a more complex interrelationship or borrowing of the technology-based medium/mediator's qualities. This borrowing from one medium in order to mediate the qualities of a different medium, is an example of remediation. In particular, in LeCompte and Lepage, the medialities of the actor, who acts in an either anti-synergic or synergic manner in their acting systems which is the content of one medium, are conveyed to another medium, in this case the technician or the technology-based operations. In Mitchell, the content of one medium, the medialities of the role of the technician, is conveyed to another medium, the actor. The above findings reflect certain production/directorial choices and, therefore, seem to function as signals of an urgent turning point in those directors' directing models, and a change, shift, and development of the role of the director.

Even though different shifting paradigms of theatricality are suggested in the three models of directing with technology, there is no doubt that the mediality of the stage-screen relationship has a determining significance for the three directors. It is possible to discern differences in their individual attitudes towards the use of the screen and the use of the interfaces. The operating logic of the remediation has affected LeCompte's

directing in her production *Hamlet*, in that she demonstrated the organising principles of new media through the paradigm of the manipulation and ongoing re-functioning of the historical theatrical archive perpetrated by the theatre group itself. In her case, this was indeed crucially dependent on the screen agent. Lepage in turn presented in *Lipsynch* the operating logic of the remediation by using the hyper-linking logic of the computer, in order to restructure the scattered scenery through the screen medium. Again, remediation was crucially dependent on the use of the screen agent. Finally, Mitchell in *Attempts* used the operating logic of the remediation in her staging of the conventions of the media's effects, through the reconstruction of the effects of the media *per se* in front of the eyes of her audience, an exposure of media's mediality, investigating not only the role of the technology-based material itself, but also the audience's response to this material. Consequently, the screen agent in her directing played a vital role too.

A further difference between the three models concerns the dramatic effects derived from the use of diverse film aesthetics. In this way the mixed mediality of the stage-screen attributes to their directing. In LeCompte's *Hamlet*, for example, the effect of postmodern deconstructive film aesthetics was selected on the grounds that it resonates with her whole directorial practice. Postmodern deconstructive cinematic formats are characterised by a reality television-like programme aesthetic, in which the artificiality of the situation is explicitly exposed to the audience. The role of this aesthetic is to add to the crisis of reality's fidelity or the truthfulness within the world of mass media. Lepage's *Lipsynch*, on the contrary, reinforced the effect of symbolic poetic film aesthetics and poetic cinematic language. The cinematic style he used on

screen mainly included the use of visual symbols, such as the image of the brain, in a poetic way in that he used universal images that seemed to relate to the audience in the manner of collective archetypes. The role of this type of poetic representation on screen was to indicate how the characters of the play are haunted by personal memories and collective fantasies, towards the creation of completely personalised visual imagery that favours a subjective point of view for interpreting reality and fundamentally privileges the irrational, intuition and the imagination against the realistic. Finally, Mitchell, in *Attempts*, emphasised the effect of a cinematic realism that enacted an aesthetic representation of the flux of time, the working of memory and the rhythms of nature by simultaneously representing inner and outer states of the characters' reality.

But how do the three models of directing with technology suggest three different shifting paradigms of theatricality? The three directors have shown how certain qualities that belong to the material of the technological medium/mediator can influence the perception of the acting by the audience. These include the immediacy of the actor's experience or presence through the development of an individual acting system by the director, such as the 'deconstruction of presence' in LeCompte's directing, the use of transformational physical theatre in Lepage's, and the psychological realism in Mitchell's directing.These models have achieved the transparency of the above three different acting systems with the help of the technological apparatus,kinetic scenery, microphones, cameras, and screens on stage. The mediality emphasises the performing activity. Therefore, a shift has taken place from the perceptual impression of notions such as the immediacy of the performer, with the immediate transmission of meaning,

or the structural principles of a cause-and-effect relationship with one element being after-each-other, to the drawing of attention to the devices of the composition of the presence from representation to simulation. Bolter and Grusin discuss this as hyper-mediacy.[677] This includes the techniques of fragmentation, juxtaposition, duplication, repetition, speeding up, and slowing down.[678] In short, it is the structural notion of having several elements next-to-each-other with a relative independence from each other.

However, there is an additional shifting level in terms of the development of techno-acting, in the three models of directing, inspired by the inter-mediality necessity, as has been already demonstrated in the analysis of the three directors' latest productions since 2007. Specifically, the directors have elaborated the concept of their productions from presenting the mediatised body, to presenting a live performance that interrogates media culture through remediating the operation of the media and borrowing film, TV, video and computer's grammar to compose narratives. In this context LeCompte in *Hamlet* interrogates the use of digital archives, hyper-media, and the operation of TV cameras for documenting a theatrical event, Lepage in *Lipsynch* interrogates film montage and sound dubbing, as well as internet hyper-linking, and Mitchell in *Attempts* interrogates the operation of TV studios and the media's achievement to divide, multiply and compose a homogenous artificial narration.

[677] From the drawing of the attention (perceptual impression) from the process of notionally immediate transmission (immediacy) to devices of composition (hypermediacy). Sarah Bay-Cheng, et. al., eds., *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 141.
[678] Sarah Bay-Cheng, et. al., eds., *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*, 35.

Another difference lies in the ways that the three directors have experimented with the interaction of the performer with technological devices, displaying a type of hybrid corporeality to create a distinguishable directorial dialectic. LeCompte has presented monitors as extensions of the performers' bodies and the formation of a body-screen hybrid with an autonomous operation of the cameras on stage, in order to further deconstruct the actor's presence, and an aestheticised *disembodiment* of technology has taken place in her directing. In this way LeCompte represents the conflicts between the human and technology and she underlines the contrast of the performer with the technological apparatus. She also builds her directing on a type of *anaesthesia* namely, a lack of *aesthesis* (feeling).

On the contrary, Lepage has enacted film projection and kinetic scenery for the formation of a body-screen and a body-kinetic scenery hybrid with the extensive use of hydraulics, which aid the acrobatics and emphasise the physicality of the actor's performance. He presents these as the performer's double, or as a metaphor for the extension of the performer's body, in order to fully construct the representation of the character as an organic totality, thus an aestheticised *embodiment* of technology has taken place in his directing. In this way, Lepage represents the convergence of human and technology and the performer appears inherently harmonised with the technological apparatus. He also builds his directing on a *synaesthesia,* namely the production of a full sense impression, which means creating an effective audiovisual stimuli to activate a higher cognitive level in the spectator.

Finally, Mitchell has presented technological tools such as the operation of the camera, as an integral part of the performer's physicality and action on stage, in the form of an organic body-screen-camera hybrid, contributing significantly to the formation of the character's subjectivity, and presents a kind of a hybridisation of technology's *disembodiment-embodiment* bridging the gap between the two.

There are, in addition to the above, three types of remediation in relation to the body/actor and the camera-screen/technological apparatus, and the presentation of hybrid corporeality on stage in LeCompte, Lepage, and Mitchell's directing. In order to suggest the performers' hybrid ontology or hybridism in the building of a character and action, LeCompte, in her production *Hamlet* remediates, since the content of one medium is always another medium, from the TV and archive medium. Lepage on the other hand, in *Lipsynch,* remediates totally cinematic bodies, borrowing also from the internet medium. In Mitchell's *Attempts* the performers' visible hybrid ontology is represented as a four dimensional building of a character founded on an actual actor performing (the organic body), a different actor narrating on the microphone (the mediatised voice) and using foley techniques to accompany the action (mediatised acoustics). Some body parts that belong to different actors are filmed and presented in nonstop shots on the screen (the mediatised body) and, at all times, is the presence of another actor filming with the camera the actor performing, as an extension of the performer's body (actor-technologists as performer's double). These techniques reflect on directorial choices and, therefore, function as framing signifiers of a creative turning point in the directing of LeCompte, Lepage, and Mitchell.

It can be seen how the three directors have managed to demonstrate a different attitude towards technology. For LeCompte, in her production *Hamlet,* technology seems to function anti-synergetically, meaning that technological elements develop an autonomous character free of their causalities, usual order, original functions or meanings. She frames ideas around Brecht's radical separation of elements that involves a critical distance and awareness of the several media that are coming together. In this way she represents a theatre in crisis. In contrast,, for Lepage in *Lipsynch,* technology seems to function synergetically, meaning that it reveals coherence and a clear grasp of the cause-and-effect relationship between the stage action organisation and the presence of technology perceived by the audience through the element of transformation. In this way, he demonstrates that the theatre is not in crisis. Another interesting element is the fact that Lepage seems to strive for a type of illusion, but not a perfect illusion. He has oriented his approach to the organisational dynamics of the artificiality of the illusion or the mechanics of a pseudo-illusion. For Mitchell in the production *Attempts on her Life* technology seems to function symbiotically, meaning anti-synergetically, for the stage by developing an autonomous character and, at the same time is synergical for the screen, revealing a kind of coherence provided by mood-oriented technology-based effects. This methodological choice also demonstrates that LeCompte's directorial attitude towards technology differs in that it focuses on the intellect, in contrast to Lepage's whose focus is on the senses and emotions and, therefore, offers sensory overload imagery. Mitchell's work seems to fall somewhere in-between the two attitudes creating a hybriditised dialectic.

How far these directors are able to develop will depend not on the playwright-director or actor-director relationship, as it did in the past, but on the directors' relationship with the collective, co-evolutionary people they have built up around themselves and who shape the creative process. People such as software designers, structural designers, set designers and multi-media artists of all kinds assume a new importance. A new form of directorial language must be established which is inextricably dependent on the cooperation of the range of collaborators that are experts on technological issues. The implication of this is that as the director's ideas are driven forward by extending the possibilities of the performance through technology, a distinctive theatricality will only be created if everyone can communicate efficiently because they can manage to speak the same language.[679] Actors, additionally, have managed to learn the technologist's language too in order to act effectively in front of the camera and to become co-authors of the production by co-acting with technology and the several multimedia features on stage. The audience, on the other hand, has learned equally how to participate actively by decoding the language of technology on stage and by attributing artistic interpretations of its presence in the theatre. As a result, the art of directing is not the sole property of the director but the result of artistic collectivism.

[679] This distinct type of engagement between directors and their multidisciplinary and technology-based collaborators is an indication of the function of technology as a meta-communicative element of the art of directing.

Therefore, in the material aspects of theatrical production a similar mutual dependence can be observed among the directors who I have presented and who embrace technology. Materials are generally required for the director's work.[680] According to Peter Brook, a director:

> ... chooses one sort of material rather than another not just for what it is but because of its potential. It's the sense of the potential that then guides him to finding the space, the actors, the forms of expression, a potential that is there and yet unknown, latent, only capable of being discovered, rediscovered, and deepened by the active work of the team.[681]

Directors can 'leave their mark on the material' as much as they do on actors or plays and can create memorable effects in their productions showing that they are interested not only in the ways that technology creates art, but also to the extent in which art influences technology. The use of technology does not obviate the need for rehearsal or research but requires a greater investment in forums where the multidisciplinary collaborators can come together to exchange ideas and experiment with the materials developing a more active relationship with technology that now becomes the prime source of theatricality and which will be subject to an aesthetic evaluation by the audiences of the future. The shifts in directorial practice which this thesis has identified in the selected directors' work has confirmed that a director's skills grow and change as the director develops a better understanding of technology and place it in their

[680] For the 'materialist semiotics' of the theatrical performance see Ric Knowles, *Reading the Material Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
[681] Peter Brook in Charles Marowitz, *Prospero's Staff: Acting and Directing in the Contemporary Theatre* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 12.

directorial logic and aesthetics, and that this shift is not produced afterwards as a passive consequence of using technology but pre-production.

I have analysed the nature of an evolving director's theatre with the use of examples from three representative directors and identified a symbiotic association with various, continuously evolving forms of technology and technically trained personnel. In general terms, my thesis has been concerned with contemporary theatre practice, which I have analysed using my own, original primary research and the construction of directorial models based on theoretical and aesthetic approaches, consistent with current theories of the nature of theatre, contributing in this way to the existing body of knowledge. The methods and terminology presented in this thesis may be used in studies of other contemporary theatre directors who are moving in creative directions with the use of technology in their productions for whatever effects. The relevance of my thesis to the broader theoretical terrain of discourse related to technology, theatre and performance is to challenge, and stimulate a theoretical and scholarly debate on the art and practice of directing. I have sought to convey the excitement that theatrical directing can attain when it finds an inspiration and an ally in technology. This shift to the 'staging philosophy', reflected by Krasner and Saltz, seems to have remained remarkably consistent over the past decades and in all probability is likely to remain so

in the future as well. The two editors manage to 'examine key issues in theater and performance from a philosophical perspective'.[682]

[682] The two editors manage to 'examine key issues in theater and performance from a philosophical perspective'. Krasner and Saltz, eds., *Staging Philosophy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 2.

APPENDIX A

PRODUCTION INFORMATION [683]

Director: Elizabeth LeCompte

Brace Up!

From Anton Chekhov's Three Sisters

By The Wooster Group

Director: Elizabeth LeCompte

Set: Jim Clayburgh

Sound: James 'J.J.' Johnson, John Erskine (1990-94), Andrew Bellware (1992), John Collins (1993-94, 2003), Geoff Abbas (2003)

Lighting: Jennifer Tipton

Costumes: Elizabeth Jenyon

Video and First Camera: Christopher Kondek, Reid Farrington (2003)

Doctor's Camera: Roy Faudree (1990-94), Clay Shirky (1990-94), Iver Findlay (2003)

Original Music: John Lurie, Lawrence 'Butch' Morris, Suzzy and Terre Roche;

Additional Music: Evan Lurie

Dance Director: Kate Valk

Dance Consultant: Jo Andres

Assistant Director/Dramaturg: Marianne Weems (1990-94), Clay Hapaz (2003)

Production Manager: Clay Shirky (1990-94), Iver Findlay (2003)

Casting:

Olga, Andrei's sister: Peyton Smith (1990-94, 2003), Sheena See (2003)

[683] For more on my viewing strategies see: Chapter Two (p. 179), Chapter Three (p. 250), and Chapter Four (p. 317).

Masha, Andrei's sister: Joan Jonas (1990-92), Karen Lashinsky (1992-94), Kate Valk (2003)

Irina, Andrei's sister: Beatrice Roth

Andrei Sergeyevich Prozorov: Willem Dafoe (1990-94), Scott Renderer (1992-94), Ari Fliakos (2003)

Natalya Ivanovna, Andrei's fiancée, later his wife: Anna Kohler

Bobik, Andrei's son: Jack Frank (on video)

Anfisa, the Prozorovs'old nurse: Josephine Buscemi (on video)

Fyodor llyich Kulygin, Masha's husband: Roy Faudree (1990-94), Paul Lazar (2003)

Colonel Alexander Ignatyevich Vershinin: Ron Vawter (1990-93), Paul Lazar (1992-94), Willem Dafoe (2003)

Baron Nikolai Lvovich Tusenbach: Jeff Webster (1990-94), Scott Shepherd (2003)

Doctor Ivan Romanovich Chebutykin: Paul Schmidt (1990-94), Roy Faudree (2003), Joel Bassin (2003)

Vassily Vasilievich Solyony: Michael Stumm (1990-91), Clay Shirky (1992-94), Gary Wilmes (2003)

Rohde, Second Lieutenant: Dave Shelley (1991-94, 2003)

Fedotik, Second Lieutenant: Scott Renderer (1992-94), Ruud van den Akker (1992-94), Michael Stumm (1994), Steve Cuiffo (2003)

Street Musician: Michael Stumm (on video)

Stage Manager/Servant: Linda Chapman (1990-94), Clay Hapaz (1994), Dominique Bousquet (2003)

Narrator: Kate Valk.

Production History

1990

May 10-13 and 21-27, The Vienna Festival, Vienna

October 4-19, The Tramway Theater, Glasgow

1991

January 18-March 9, The Performing Garage, New York

March 21-24, On the Boards, Seattle, Washington

April 3-6, Northrup Auditorium, Minneapolis, Minnesota

April 24-28, Frankfurt

May 4-9, Hebel-Theater, Berlin

May 14-20, Amsterdam

May 25-29, Theater der Gegenwert, Vienna

September 12-October 26, The Performing Garage, New York

November 6-14, Frankfurt

November 19-27, Kaaitheater, Brussels

1992

March 27-April 25, The Performing Garage, New York

May, Zurich

May, Lisbon

October 28-November 1, Tramway, Glasgow

November 10-14, The Sigma Festival, Bordeaux

1994

March 3-6, The Hong Kong Arts Festival, Hong Kong

September 23-28, Hamburg

October, The Performing Garage, New York

2003

February 19-13 April, St. Ann's Warehouse, New York

Director: Elizabeth LeCompte

Hamlet

By William Shakespeare

By The Wooster Group

Director: Elizabeth LeCompte

Set: Ruud van den Akker

Video: Reid Farrington

Sound: Geoff Abbas, Joby Emmons and Matt Schloss

Lighting: Jennifer Tipton and Gabe Maxson

Costumes: Claudia Hill

Original Music: Laertes's songs by Fischerspooner

Additional Music: Warren Fischer

Movement coach: Natalie Thomas

Fight coach: Felix Ivanov

Director of production/stage manager: Ruth E. Sternberg, Buzz Cohen

Technical director: Aron Deyo; Assistant Director: Teresa Hartmann; Production Manager: Bozkurt Karasu, Jenny Gersten

General manager: Nicki Genovese

Associate artistic director: Mandy Hackett

Casting:

Nurse: Dominique Bousquet

Claudius/Marcellus/Ghost/Gravedigger: Ari Fliakos

Attendant/Soldier/Banister: Alessandro Magania

Bernardo/Rosencrantz/Guildenstern/Player Queen/Osric: Daniel Pettrow

Polonius: Bill Raymond

Hamlet: Scott Shepherd

Laertes/Rosencrantz/Guildenstern/Player King: Casey Spooner

Gertrude/Ophelia: Kate Valk

Horatio: Judson Williams

Production History

2006

June 27-1, Festival Grec, Barcelona

November 4-10, Festival d'Automne, Paris

November 16-20, Hebbel Theater, Berlin

2007

February 27-March 25, St. Ann's Warehouse, Brooklyn, New York

June 6-9, Holland Festival, Amsterdam

October 9-December 2, Public Theater, New York

January 30-February 10, REDCAT, Los Angeles

2008

June 13-16, Hellenic Festival, Athens

2009

August 2-5, Festiwal Szekspirowski, Gdansk

2010

May 6-9, International Shakespeare Festival, Bulandra Theater, Bucharest

2011

October 12-16, Ringling International Arts Festival, The Cook Theatre, Sarasota

2012

October 4-7, Dublin Theater Festival, O' Reilly Theatre, Dublin

October 24-November 18, The Performing Garage, New York

2013

January 17-20, Festival Internacional Santiago a Mil, Santiago

March 13-17, SESC Pompeia, São Paulo

August 10-13, Edinburgh International Festival, Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh

Director: Robert Lepage

Elsinore

Variations on William Shakespeare's Hamlet

By Ex Machina
Director: Robert Lepage
Set: Carl Fillion
Lighting: Alain Lortie, Nancy Mongrain
Music: Robert Caux
Multimedia: Jacques Collin
Costumes: Yvan Gaudin
Props: Manon Desmarais
Wigs: Rachel Tremblay
Fights: Jean- François Gagnon

Casting:

Hamlet: Robert Lepage (1995-1996), Peter Darling (1997)
Hamlet's double: Pierre Bernier

Production History

1995
November 2-8, Monument Nationale, Montréal
December, Centre Culturel de 1' Universite de Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke

1996
February 15-17, Athaneum Theatre, Chicago
February, Trois-Rivières

February 15-17, Athenaeum Theatre, Chicago

March, Le Menage-Scene Nationale de Maugeuge, Maubeuge

April 2-4, La Maison des Arts de Créteil, Créteil

April 20, Du Maurier World Stage Festival, Toronto

May 2-6, Hebbel Theater, Berlin

May-June, Kunsten Festival des Arts, Bruxelles

August, Helinski Festival, Helsinki

August, Göteborg Dans and Theater Festival, Göteborg

September, National Teatret, Oslo

September, Aaarhus Festuge, Aarhus

September, Kampnagel Theatre, Hamburg

September, Rotterdase Schouwburg, Rotterdam

October, Festival International des Francophones en Limousin, Theatre de l' Union-Centre dramatique de Limoges, Limoges

October 10-12, Teatro Biondo Stabile, Palerme

November 12-13, Palasport, Udine

November 17-18, Athenaeum Theatre, Chicago

November 20-23, Nottingham Playhouse, Nottingham

November 27-30, Northern Stage, Newcastle

December 2-7, Tramway, Glasgow

December 11-14, Cambridge Arts Theatre, Cambridge

1997

January 4-11, Royal National Theatre, Lyttleton Theatre, London

August 12-16, Edinburgh International Festival, Edinburgh, Scotland

September 9-13, National Arts Centre Theatre, Ottawa

September 24-October 12, Stamford Center, Stamford, Connecticut

October 7-12, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Majestic Theater, New York

October 17-19, Gaiety Theatre, Dublin

October, Teatro Real, Madrid

Director: Robert Lepage

Lipsynch

Written by Frédérike Bédard, Carlos Belda, Rebecca Blankenship, Lise Castonguay, John Cobb, Nuria Garcia, Marie Gignac, Sarah Kemp, Robert Lepage, Rick Miller, Hans Piesbergen

By Ex Machina and Théâtre Sans Frontières

Director: Robert Lepage

Dramaturgy Consultant: Marie Gignac

Set: Jean Hazel

Multimedia: Jacques Collin

Lighting: Étienne Boucher

Sound: Jean-Sébastien Côté

Costumes: Yasmina Giguère

Props: Virginie Leclerc

Images produced: Jacques Collin

Wigs: Richard Hansen

Assistant Director: Félix Dagenais

Creative Collaboration during rehearsals: Sophie Martin

Production and Tour Manager: Louise Roussel

Production Assistant: Marie-Pierre Gagné

Technical Director: Paul Bourque

Stage Manager: Judith Saint-Pierre

Head Stagehand: Anne Marie Bureau

Stagehands: Simon Laplante, Éric Lapointe

Technical Consultants: Catherine Guay, Tobie Horswill

Set Design Collaborator: Carl Fillion

Recorded Voices: Adrian Egan, Philip Graeme, Mary Harris, Helen King, Rick Miller

Casting:

Marie and others: Frédérike Bédard
Sebastian and others: Carlos Belda
Ada and others: Rebecca Blankenship
Michelle and others: Lise Castonguay
Jackson and others: John Cobb
Lupe and others: Nuria Garcia
Sarah and others: Sarah Kemp
Jeremy and others: Rick Miller
Thomas and others: Hans Piesbergen

Production History

2007
February 19-24, Northern Stage, Newcastle
April 19-21, Teatro Guimerá, Santa Cruz de Tenerife
June 1-7, Salle Pierre Mercure, Montreal

2008
September 6-14, Barbican Theatre, London
October 25-November 2, Festival de Otoño, Teatro de Madrid, Madrid

Director: Katie Mitchell

The Oresteia

By Aeschylus

A new version by Ted Hughes: The Home Guard (Part One) and The Daughters of Darkness (Part Two)
By The Royal National Theatre
Director: Katie Mitchell
Set: Vicki Mortimer
Sound: Gareth Fry
Lighting: Nigel J. Edwards
Costumes: Yvan Gaudin
Choreography: Struan Leslie
Music arrangements: Melissa Holding, Joe Townsend
Video designer: Chris Pleydell
Company voice work: Patsy Rodenburg
Stage manager: Angela Fairclough
Greek drama adviser: Oliver Taplin
Production manager: Jason Barnes

Casting:

Nurse, Cassandra, Electra: Lilo Baur
Elder, Herald, Pylades, Hermes: Robert Bowman
Elder, Agamemnon, Apollo: Michael Gould
Elder, Aegistus: Sebastian Harcombe
Nurse, Clytemnestra, Trojan Slave: Anastasia Hille
Elder, Watchman, Orestes: Paul Hilton
Elder, Pianist, Accordionist, Trojan Slave: Melissa Holding
Nurse, Trojan Slave: Wendy Kweh

Nurse, Trojan Slave, Cilissa: Ineke Lievens

Nurse, Trojan Slave, Athena: Joy Richardson

Iphigenia, Trojan Slave: Asta Sighvats

Elder, Violinist: Joe Townsend

Production History

1999-2000

The Home Guard (Part One)

September 24-April 1, Cottesloe theatre, Royal National Theatre, London

The Daughters of Darkness (Part Two)

November 18-April 1, Cottesloe theatre, Royal National Theatre, London

2000

April 10-15, Du Maurier World Stage Festival, Du Maurier Theatre, Toronto

May 2-6, The Lowry Centre, Salford, Greater Manchester

Director: Katie Mitchell

Attempts on her Life

By Martin Crimp

By The Royal National Theatre
Director: Katie Mitchell and the company
Set: Vicki Mortimer
Sound: Gareth Fry
Lighting: Paule Constable
Choreography: Donna Berlin
Music: Paul Clark
Music consultant: Simon Allen
Video designer: Leo Warner for Fifty Nine Ltd
Company voice work: Kate Godfrey
Costume supervisor: Lynette Mauro
Production manager: Diane Willmott
Stage manager: Laura Deards

Casting:

Claudie Blakley
Kate Duchêne
Michael Gould
Liz Kettle
Jaqueline Kington
Dina Korzun
Helena Lymbery
Paul Ready
Jonah Russell
Zubin Varla

Sandra Voe

James Bolt

Sarha Northgraves

Production History

2007

March 8-May 10, Lyttelton theatre, Royal National Theatre, London

APPENDIX B

GLOSSARY OF TERMS, THEORIES, THEATRE PRACTICES AND TECHNOLOGIES

Adolphe Appia's lighting theory

In particular, Appia's lighting theory included the model of 'diffused lighting' and 'formative lighting'. The 'diffused lighting' provided a sort of luminous undercoat, a general shadowless lighting. The 'formative lighting' was the creative light. The conjunction of the above provided a sophisticated lighting design with dramatic effects: it highlighted objects, built up, took away, distorted, modulated mood and atmosphere, and took on form and movement. For more on the work and life of Adolphe Appia see Adolphe Appia, *The Work of Living Art: A Theory of the Theatre*, Adolphe Appia and Barnard Hewitt, eds. (Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1960); Denis Bablet and Marie- Louise Bablet, eds., *Adolphe Appia 1862 - 1928: Actor - Space - Light* (Zurich: Pro Helvetia and London: John Calder, 1982); Richard Beacham, *Adolphe Appia: Theatre Artist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

Body without Organs (Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari)

The politics of contemporary bodies has also been explored by Deleuze and Guattari through their notion of 'body without organs'. According to this a 'body without

organs' is not an 'organ-less' body but it 'is opposed to the organisation of the organs' under a process of continuous 'becoming' (constructing itself). For a detailed description see Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, 'How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Organs?' in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 149-166.

Constructivism

Constructivism's ideas, developed in Moscow between 1920 and 1926, were widely based on the socialist utilitarian principle that art should serve the people rather than elaborate on itself. See Kenneth Pickering, *Key Concepts in Drama and Performance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 126-130. For more on the principles of the industrial designs of the Russian constructivism and the role of the artists in the design of the production process itself see Maria Gough, *The Artist as Producer: Russian Constructivism in Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

Directors (artistic director, stage director, stage manager, producer)

In present times different terminology is used to to refer to particular types of 'directors' within a theatrical organisation. For example an 'artistic director' is the person with the overall charge of the artistic policy of a theatre or company. Kenneth Branagh states, 'God knows what we expected from an artistic director: a nanny, a psychiatric nurse, an estate agent, a mega-talent.' See Kenneth Branagh, *Beginning* (London: Chatto and

Windus, 1989), 160, qtd. in Martin Harrison, ed. *The Language of Theatre* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1998), 19.

The ‘stage director’ was once synonymous in the US with the notion of ‘stage manager’ and in Britain with the notion of ‘producer’. After World War II the British adopted the US notion of ‘stage director’, meaning the ‘stage manager’. Stage managers or stage directors are the people who during the run of the show ‘are in complete charge of the stage and the backstage areas and the organisation thereof’. See Martin Harrison, ed. *The Language of Theatre* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1998), 256. Performers and personnel of all the theatre’s departments are answerable to them. Before and during the rehearsal period the stage manager together with the stage management team have a long list of organisational responsibilities regarding the run of the performance. As a result the stage manager is the person who directs everything behind the scenes.

The ‘producer’, on the other hand, initiates, coordinates, supervises and controls matters such as fundraising, hiring key personnel, and arranging for distribution. The producer is involved throughout all phases of the theatre-making process. Their most important task is marketing and advertising the performance. The producer is considered the chief of staff (such as the technicians and the administrative staff), is more involved in the day-to-day production - such as liaising with everyone involved in the production, finding solutions to problems that occur along the way - involved in the financing of a project - and most of the times they control the budget -, while the director is in charge

of the artistic line. If the production is going on tour, the producer also oversees the booking of venues in advance, transport and publicity for the show.

Double of Theatre (Antonin Artaud)

For Artaud 'the double of theatre' is when theatre mirrors not only life (naturalistic representation) but also our unconscious (dreams or visions via total theatre representation) revealing life in its totality. See Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and Its Double*, trans. Mary Caroline Richards (New York: Grove Press, 1994). Antonin Artaud. *Artaud on Theatre.* Edited by Claude Schumach and Brian Singleton (London: Methuen Drama, 2001).

Eisenstein, Sergei

Eisenstein intergraged actors with filmed decoration at the First Proletkult Workers' Theatre (Moscow) in which he was appointed Head of Design. In Nick Kaye, *Multi-media: Video-Installation-Performance* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 194. In 1921 he joined Meyerhold's Theatre Workshop and worked on set designs. Eisenstein's first stage production in 1923, Ostrovsky's play *There is Enough Simplicity for Every Wise Man* (written in 1868), included his first film, *Glumov's Diary*. Read more in 'Sergei Eisenstein - Director - Films as Director' Web Page, accessed Nov. 20, 2009.<http://www.filmreference.com/Directors-

DuFr/EisensteinSergei.html#ixzz12E9389QI>. For more on the Eisenstein's montage theory see Sergei M. Eisenstein, *Towards a Theory of Montage*, ed. Michael Glenny and Richard Taylor, vol. 1 and 2 (London: BFI Publishing, 1991).

Eurhythmics

Eurhythmics forms the basis of the Emile Jacques-Dalcroze music method. Education by and for music involves relating natural body movements to musical rhythms (phrasing, nuances, durations etcetera) and aptitude for imagination and reflection. The exercises presented are a means of discovering and adapting to music. By developing sensitivity and an ability for rapid representation, eurhythmics simultaneously addresses the auditory and motor faculties. The use of eurhythmics is instrumental in enhancing and diversifying body vocabulary, thereby encouraging the same qualities in musical thought. This development of the musical ear, based upon the experience of the whole body relative to the space surrounding it, finds its natural extension in the study of solfège, leading in turn to the study of an instrument and musical improvisation, and to the study of body technique and expression that opens the way to artistic dancing and choreographic creation. For more on *Eurhythmics* see 'Dalcroze Web Page', accessed Nov. 20, 2009. <http://www.dalcroze.ch/html/en/furtryth.htm>.

Fortuny, Mariano

Mariano Fortuny registered patents such as the 'Fortuny Cyclorama Dome' (in 1904), which could easily change stage lighting from a bright sky to a faint dusk and the 'Fortuny Lamp', a reflector lamp which worked on the same principle (stage lighting). Mariano Fortuny y Madrazo (1871-1949) was a Spanish dress and fabric designer-artist renowned for his Art Nouveau textiles and dresses worn by Isadora Duncan and Eleanora Duse. For the theatre he created innovative lighting techniques, and he invented his own fabric dyes and fabrics, as well as machinery for printing cloth. He held more than 20 patents for his inventions. 'Mariano Fortuny.' *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed July 9, 2012. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/214343/Mariano-Fortuny>; 'Fortuny', accessed July 9, 2012. <http://www.fortuny.com/#/mariano_fortuny>. For more on Fortuny see Delphine Desveaux, *Mariano Fortuny, 1871-1949* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998). Guillermo De Omsa, *Fortuny: The Life and the Work of Mariano Fortuny* (London: Aurum Pr Ltd, May 1999). Anne Marie Deschodt, and Doretta Davanzo Poli, *Fortuni* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001).

Ghost in the Machine (Arthur Koestler)

In this collection of essays about biology Koestler analyses the human mind (neurophysiological coordination) through behaviourism and the Darwinian theory according to which mental evolution (evolutionary potential) can be explained as a

succession of random tries (such as the random mutations in Darwin) preserved by selective reinforcement (natural selection). For more on the 'Ghost in the Machine' theory on the philosophy of the mind see Arthur Koestler, *The Ghost in the Machine* (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

Happenings and Fluxus movements

Their work on film, music, dance, installations, performance, painting and sculpture was characterised by a celebration of a do-it-yourself ethos, by mixing different art forms, challenging traditional arts and theatrical practices, giving the opportunity to the audience participate actively in the work of art, and by focusing on topics related to political and social concerns. Nam June Paik, John Cage, Merce Cannigham, Robert Rauschenberg, Wolf Vostel, Dick Higgins, Yvonne Rainer, were some of the representatives of these movements. For more on Happenings and Fluxus see RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2001), 128-134 and RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance: Live Art since 1960* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998), 83-85.

Inter-mediality

Inter-mediality is a form of multi-mediality in which the director uses inter-medial technologies as mediators, computer-generated imagery based on the structures of

digital technology, in order to mediate theatrical aesthetics via inter-medial dramatic effects to expand the stage language and, as a result, the theatricality.

Medialities of Technology

Technology as mediator produces medialities, which is when the director uses specific technology-based media to contribute to theatricality.

Mediatised Performance or Mediatisation

A performance is defined as mediatised when the production includes the use of recording and playback technologies. The 'mediatised' is a mediated presence through mediatisation, which is a technique of representation by the use of media technology. For more on the mediatised performance see Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).

Mirror Stage (Jacques Lacan)

For Lacan the 'mirror stage', the projection of the body in the frame of the mirror, emphasises narcissism contributing to the infant's emerging perceptions of selfhood. Lacan, Jacques. 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as revealed in

Psychoanalytic Experience', *Écrits: a Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977), 8-29.

Multi-culturalism and internationalism (in Robert Lepage's work)

A considerable amount of literature has been published on multi-culturalism, internationalism and politics in Lepage's work. For example see Karen Fricker, 'Tourism, the Festival Marketplace and Robert Lepage's The Seven Streams of the River Ota,' *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 13.4 (2003): 79-93; Jennifer Harvie, 'Transnationalism, Orientalism, Cultural Tourism: La Trilogie des Dragons and The Seven Streams of the River Ota,' in Joseph I. Donohoe and Jane Koustas, eds., *Robert Lepage: Theater sans Frontières* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2000), 109-125; Jen Harvie and Erin Hurley, 'States of Play: Locating Québec in the Performances of Robert Lepage, Ex Machina, and the Cirque du Soleil,' *Theatre Journal* 51.3 (1999): 299-315; Barbara Hodgdon, 'Looking For Mr. Shakespeare after 'The Revolution': Robert Lepage's Intercultural Dream Machine,' *Shakespeare, Theory and Performance*, James C. Bulman, ed. (London: Routledge, 1996), 68-91; Robert Lepage interviewed by Christie Carson, 'Collaboration, Translation, Interpretation,' *New Theatre Quarterly* 33 (1993): 131-36; Nigel Hunt, 'The Global Voyage of Robert Lepage,' *Drama Review* 33.2 (1989): 104-18; Fricker also talked about *The Andersen Project* at the *Robert Lepage Conference* in London (2006), and her analysis was from the point of view of globalisation and Québec's cultural policy. See Karen Fricker,

‘Cultural Relativism and Grounded Politics in Robert Lepage’s ‘The Andersen Project,’ *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 17.2, (2007): 119-41.

Multi-mediality

Multi-mediality is a form of mediality in which the director uses multiple technological media as mediators, for example light, sound and video, with the intention of expanding the world of the play and enhancing theatricality.

Physical theatre

‘Physical theatre’ is a general term which describes a mode of performance that is based primarily on the physicality of the actors. It is inspired by: commedia dell arte, clowning, mime, mask, circus, puppetry and dance-theatre. For fuller description see Kenneth Pickering, *Key Concepts in Drama and Performance* (London, New York: Palgrave, 2005), 145. ‘Devising theatre’ is a way of creating plays and theatre pieces which do not emanate directly from pre-fixed texts but from the physicality of the actors themselves. For a further description see Kenneth Pickering, *Key Concepts in Drama and Performance*, 15. For more on devising methods see E.Govan, H. Nicholson and K. Normington, *Making a Performance: Devising Histories and Contemporary Practices* (London, New York: Routledge, 2007). For relations of Lepage with the postmodernism see Hans Bertens and Joseph Natoli, eds., *Postmodernism: The Key Figures* (Oxford, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2002), 224-230.

Postmodernism

Postmodernism has been described as a condition of culture where previously distinct categories of ideas, economic, political, or cultural ideas, and previous boundaries, such as the boundaries between high and low culture (pop culture), have become fluid and unstable. For more on postmodernism see: Jean-François Lyotard, *The postmodern condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991). Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994). Victor E. Taylor and Charles E. Winquist, eds. *Encyclopedia of Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 2003).

Issues such as the rupture and the discontinuity with the historical past were greater than before. For more on postmodernism and theatre see: Philip Auslander, 'Toward a Concept of the Political in Postmodern Theatre,' *Theatre Journal* 39. 1 (March 1987): 31. Philip Auslander, *From Acting to Performance: Essays in Modernism and Postmodernism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 39-45. Philip Auslander, *Presence and Resistance: Postmodernism and Cultural Politics in Contemporary*

American Performance (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 83-104. Hans Bertens and Joseph Natoli, eds. *Postmodernism: The Key Figures* (Oxford, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2002), 180. Irene Eynat-Confino and Eva Šormová, eds. *Space and The Postmodern Stage,* (Prague: DivadelinÍ Ústav Theatre Institute, 2000).

This generational conflict was powerfully expressed through an attack on institutional artistic practice. However, the validation of pop culture, as a challenge to the canon, gradually led to a neo-conservatism, in which postmodernism critique was enormously expanded. According to Keane postmodernism involves:

> the practice of resistance; challenging master narratives with the discourse of others; questioning rather than exploiting cultural codes; opening closed systems to the heterogeneity of texts; becoming more sensitive to difference; emphasizing discontinuity, incompleteness and paradoxes- and yet phases such as these remain highly amorphous, thereby marginalizing or repressing outright further consideration of socio-political questions. See John Keane, 'The Modern Democratic Revolution: Reflections on Jean-François Lyotard's La condition postmoderne,' *Chicago Review* 35:4 (1986): 11.

Postmodernism, deconstruction and apolitical or depoliticisation were strongly linked. Deconstruction is seen as a typically aesthetic strategy of the postmodernist era which is the cultural dominant. According to Derrida, the deconstructive modality suggests two possibilities: either a deconstruction 'without changing terrain', by repeating what is implied in the founding concepts, or a deconstruction by means of 'changing terrain':

roughly placing oneself outside, and declaring an absolute break and difference. Derrida says:

> The deconstructive options are: a. To attempt an exit and a deconstruction without changing terrain, by repeating what is implicit in the founding concepts and the original problematic, by using against the edifice (building, construction) the instruments or stones available in the house .... Here, one risks ceaselessly confirming, consolidating ... at an always more certain depth, that which one allegedly deconstructs b. To decide to change terrain, in a discontinuous and irruptive fashion, by brutally placing oneself outside, and by affirming an absolute break and difference . . . such a displacement can be caught [in "forms of trompe l' oeil perspective"], thereby inhabiting more naively and more strictly than ever the inside one declares one has deserted. See Jacques Derrida, *The Ends of Man: Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 135.

Therefore, deconstruction has been identified as simultaneously occupying and resisting the given structures. The effects of deconstruction are the avoidance of conferring authority, as well as a focus on the process of representation itself.

Apolitical or depoliticisation are the cause of the dominance of the deconstructive aesthetic modality. See Patrice Pavis, 'The Classical Heritage of Modern Drama: The Case of Postmodern Theatre', *Modern Drama* 29 (March 1986): 18, Johannes Birringer, 'Postmodern Performance and Technology', *Performing Arts Journal* 26/27 (1985): 23. Scholarship has questioned the ability of postmodernism to make political contributions. The absence of evident explicit explanation that typifies postmodernist art has rendered the work of art apolitical. The ability of postmodernist art to move fluidly, backward and forward, between commercial and highly aesthetic representation – disqualified it

from being considered as a means to an objective political stance and commentary. Thus, the postmodernist work of art was not seen as political work. Auslander sees the reason for this attitude as lying in 'the obvious inappropriateness of the political art strategies left over from the historical avant - garde of the early 20th century and from the 1960s' and 'in a widespread critical inability to conceive of aesthetic/political praxis in terms other than these inherited ones'. See Philip Auslander, 'Toward a Concept of the Political in Postmodern Theatre' *Theatre Journal* 39.1 (Mar. 1987): 21.

However, Auslander argues that any work of art, like theatre and performance, in fact, makes political contributions 'by miming the flow of mediatized culture'. Following this reasoning, historical and political meanings are derived precisely from this examination of the flow of the postmodern mediatised culture. In particular the examination of particular cultural images or the representation of the structures of the postmodern mediatized culture itself (for example the strategies of entertainment, information, and communication technologies, which provide new experiences) provoke a broad thematic terrain of political and philosophical discourses on the anxiety of survival under the cultural logic of late capitalism, the disappearance of the distinctions between public and private, and the false intimacy of celebrity. Furthermore, the convergence with technology produces a multiplicity of meanings based on ideas such as isolation, surveillance, suppressed desires, and control and poses an essential signification/representation of the 'post-human condition'. 'The ideological battle became a battle for control of the means of persuasion.' Philip Auslander,

'Toward a Concept of the Political in Postmodern Theatre': 25, and Philip Auslander, *Presence and Resistance*: 83-104.

Role of the Director

A director was imagined as a martinet disciplinarian who would superintend and patronise/matronise the whole conduct and processing of a theatrical piece. He/she is the person who is in overall charge of a production and co-ordinates all aspects of a show. The director has control over the compatibility/appropriateness of any element in the artistic work (for example, the character, form, style, or plot) with the work as a whole. The directors adjust the acting, the decor and generally the style of a production so as to provide a socially accepted or expected convention or an avant-garde practice. At the beginning the director was conceived as an excellent stage manager who was at the same time an author, a chief/leading actor, a prompter, an antiquarian and a costumier. Later the director started to assume a new individual function that was different to the one in past times. He/she was gradually seen as an authority separate and separable from the actor, the dramatist or the producer-stage manager, something which was, according to theatre history, considered to be problematic. Additionally the director would have to impose a point of view. The director's vision began to take a recognisable artistic form. For example Stanislavsky's praxis was interwoven with the psychological realism approach, Reinhardt's with the baroque-Wagnerian and Meyerhold's with the constructivist-Marxian.

The director generally is the person responsible for the artistic interpretation of a play and for the rehearsals. The director is responsible for deciding how a particular script is to be interpreted and their mission includes the discovery and defense of new authors and plays, as well as the ensemble's interpretation. Playwriting was always a stimulus for the director's imagination. According to Otto Brahm (1856-1912), the founder of the Freie Bühne (Berlin, 1889- 1901), the director is

> … the one who must be sensitive to the inner spirit of a work and project in its representation of the individual tone and mood born of that certain work and none other. Must be capable of perceiving those basic mood-creating tones and of making them resound in the audience through the medium of his performers. In Helen Krich Chinoy, 'The emergence of the director', in Cole and Chinoy, eds., *Directors on Directing*, 30.

The director is also responsible for the coaching of the performers and for the rehearsals. Directors basically recreate human behaviour. This means that directors can shape acting and what the acting does within the *mise en scene*. Through specific exercises the director makes the actor seek for physical precision and to 'look what happens in life more precisely as a way of fuelling their work on stage'. In Katie Mitchell, *The Director's Craft: A Handbook for the Theatre* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 154. This is mainly to do with how emotion affects the body, how the characters are using the props, and how they establish their 'character tempo' meaning 'the speed at which the character thinks and does things physically.' See: *Ibid*, 160. The director recreates the life of each and every character present in a given circumstance meaning a mode of behaviour suitable for the character. The choices will be based on the

knowledge of the script, the characters and an understanding of what motivates the behaviour in the scene. As a result the director has to sharpen sensory perception. A functional memory for detail and the skill of specificity are important and essential to the director's work.

The director's mission is to weld a harmonious work of art and a cohesive audience, something which is rare in a contemporary diverse urban, industrial, mass society. The director is the person who by multifarious activities would restore the artistic and social unity that a collective art of the theatre used to have in past times. By blending diverse arts into a single organic image, the director 'gave form to the complex modern theatre'. In Cole and Chinoy, eds., *Directors on Directing*, 3. The ideal director must be an actor, architect, electrician and an expert in geography, history, costumes, accessories, scenery etcetera. However the most essential trait is for them to have a wide knowledge and understanding of human nature and to recognise the potential/innate talents of their collaborators.

Additionally, directors develop the ability to solve problems effectively by manipulating an arsenal of intelligent problem-solving techniques and search strategies, such as the important synergies between different procedures and factors. In other words, directing is a heuristic device for solving practical-aesthetical problems. By the term 'heuristic' (word with Greek origin meaning 'to find') I mean a process of trial and error in order to exploit the structure and the nature of the theatrical environment. Consequently, the directorial process has to do with activities such as learning, discovering and problem-

solving, in other words, matching the structure and the nature of the modern heuristics. (See Zbigniew Michalewicz and David B. Fogel, *How To Solve It: Modern Heuristics* (Berlin: Springer Verlag, 2000). The director has to adjust the representation of the pieces of the 'puzzle', to recognise the disparity between the present state of the production and the desired state, to find ways to reduce this disparity. In other words, the director has to think creatively and efficiently about the aspects of the production in order to come up with a solution. Christine White states that technical theatre 'requires an understanding of solutions which my fall into different theoretical practices'. See Christine White, *Technical theatre*, 1. Subsequently, the nature of modern heuristics tends to be applicable to directing and can function as the key to understanding how directors make aesthetic decisions.

Spirituality of the Artist

The qualities of the tragic in Greek tragedy, and therefore in the function of art, according to Friedrich Nietzsche, are the 'Apollonian' (desirable illusion, vision, transcendence) and the 'Dionysian' (chaos, ecstasy, madness) that provide a full redemption for the human will from worldly suffering. For an address to the issue of spirituality, metaphysics and theatre see Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, Reymond Geuss, and Ronald Speirs, eds., trans. Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). For the nature of the spirituality, metaphysics, ritual and religion in the 'theatre of cruelty' in Artaud's theatre theory see

Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, trans. Victor Corti (London: Calder, 1981).

Svoboda, Josef

The Czech stage-designer and architect Josef Svoboda (1920-2002) combined science, technology and design in his productions permitting performers to interact with film imagery. Together with the Czech stage director Alfréd Radok (1914-1976) founded the theatre company Laterna Magika, in Prague 1958, where he applied his ideas of using automatic object manipulation, projection of photographic images, and changeable lighting in order to create a living, mobile, flexible, transformable, and kinetic design for the stage. Svoboda strongly believed that scientific and technological foundations were necessary ingredients of a total concept of a dramatically functional scenography. For him an imaginative poetic design based on technology was to serve acting and dramatic action. For more on the set design of Svoboda see Jarka, Burian, *The Scenography of Josef Svoboda* (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1971); J. M, Burian, and Josef Svoboda, *The Secret of Theatrical Space: The Memoirs of Josef Svoboda* (Tonbridge: Applause, 1992).

Theatre of Estrangement

Bertolt Brecht's distancing model of directing which provides the 'alienation effect', according to which the audience is engaged critically to the production and actor's attitude towards the role is objective and detached.

Theatrical Aesthetics and Theatricality

Theatrical Aesthetics concerns the production and director's style and the semiotic codes, while Theatricality is the relationship between the stage and the audience (audience experience, reception).

Total Theatre

Richard Wagner's directorial paradigm of convergence that produces balance, harmony, and coherence that induce the spectator into entering into a particular state of perception modeled on dreams.

Orlan

The French performance artist Orlan uses the surgical event as a site of performance. Since 1990 she has undergone a series of surgical operations in France and Belgium to reconstruct her body according to somatic and symbolic characteristics from the history

of art. In this way Orlan constructs a critical performance of the imperatives of the beauty. She also performs how the 'natural' is rewritten by technology into an artifice, literally embodying the notion of the cyborg. This 'reincarnation' through the technological factor is the means by which the performance (artwork) broadcasts-communicates with the audience exploring at the same time the materiality of its own nature. For Orlan see Gabriella Giannachi, *Virtual Theatres* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 49-55.

Stanislavskian acting system

In Konstantin Stanislavsky's acting system the actor plays a role, with an emphasis on elements such as the subjectivity of the character and reaching the emotions through the body, and the dramatic effect is the illusion.

Stelarc

Stelarc (Stelios Arcadiou a Greek Cypriot who lived in Japan and Australia) is a sculptor and performer who has used advanced technologies for his performances. He is interested in the human-machine interface, where the human-machine intercourse functions as a realm of action, rather than information, and the hybridization of the body with technology. His body is supplemented by computer-directed sensors (electro-magnetic motion-capture system) directly implanted into the skin (such as in the case of the third ear with chip implants) or computer-generated sensors that map his body

motions onto a virtual body. He also uses manipulators controlled by EMG signals (signals from electrodes positioned on the muscles and constitute a multi-channel muscle stimulation system with the use of a computer-interface) allowing simulation of the programmed movement. Additionally his body had been fitted with sensors, electrodes and transducers that trigger sampled body sounds or amplified body signals and functions as a video switcher and mixer and, as a result, with remote programmers composes sound sequences and video images. The dramatic effect generated by the intercourse of the human and the machine is an enhanced feeling of alienation 'which makes the choreography and the materiality of the body on stage more interesting for the audience' according to Giannachi. See Gabriella Giannachi, *Virtual Theatres*, 55-62.

Uncanny' (Sigmund Freud)

For Freud the concept of the 'uncanny' concerns the emergence of the 'dark self' or 'other' (or the return of a memory long since repressed) what was once 'heimisch', home-like and familiar (and is now repressed). The 'uncanny' emerge from the subconscious (and therefore return to the consciousness) to create a double reality where the familiar becomes frighteningly unfamiliar (and it has the appearance of something frightening). For more on this see Sigmund Freud,'The Uncanny', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey, vol. XVII (London: Hogarth, 1953), 219-252.

Vertov, Dziga

Vertov was a Formalist film director whose notorious film *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) has influenced several generations of film-makers. For more on Vertov's kino-eye theory see Dziga Vertov, *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, ed. Annette Michelson and trans. Kevin O'Brien (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

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